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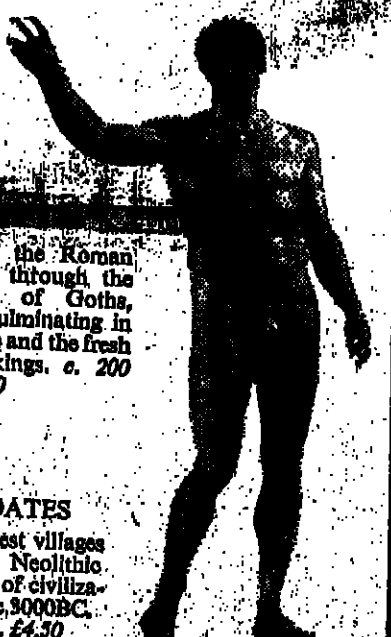
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An oracle turned jester

By David Bromwich

EDWARD MENDELSON (Editor): W. H. Auden: Collected Poems 696pp. Faber and Faber. £7.50.

This is the Auden canon as planned by Auden. The poet who was apt to deride "accurate scholarship" would nevertheless have been pleased with the editorial job: the *Collected Poems* supplies dates and variant titles, but otherwise keeps the apparatus to a helpful minimum, and is good to the eye and the touch. We shall have to wait for a promised second volume, *The English Auden*, if we want to read the canon as a palimpsest, compare the rubbed-out edges with the bold outline laid over them, and arrive at some conclusion about the poet's character. In the meantime Auden's literary executor, Edward Mendelson, wisely cautions us to regard Auden's final change of dress as indeed final. It is, but a few intractable spirits ought to remain on the scene to ask if this was not after all another disguise. *Sylvia Plath* (1965). Auden defended revisions "as a matter of principle" by quoting Valéry: "A poem is never finished; it is only abandoned." The allusion is not quite candid. Valéry, who in these matters, saw the work of a poet as forming an activity of unbroken meditation. To decide what the public should see of the meditation was a secondary worry: a fragment might be as important as a completed poem. What could a poem be for Auden, on the other hand, if not the finished expression of feeling on a given occasion?

Auden generally revised for sentiment rather than sound, and, "with-out being an exponent of 'pure sound'", one may raise a simple enough objection. To play the sage or pedant, and chasten the record of an earlier renegade self, is never good for the character; the results, when it is a poet who does this, are seldom happy for the poetry; and Auden is an exception to neither rule. Poetry survived, he said, in his elegy for Yeats, "In the valley of its making where executives/ Would never want to tamper." Poets are the first to tamper. Consider the following inconspicuous change in *Payage Moralisé*:
It is the sorrow; shall it melt?
Would gush, flush, green these
mountains and these valleys,
And we rebuild our cities, not dream
of islands.

The altered version gives "It is our sorrow...". It is an emphatic bit of scoring. But the loss is very great: the poem has given up something of its tacit strength. "Our sorrow", it insists, "yes; all of us." What was implication is now statement. Our and sorrow, by the way, do not mix well as sounds. And one slows down the cadence where, in the first version, it was slowed and then halted, as if stunned, only at sorrow, the last word of the first sentence of the envoy.

More painful and harder to miss is a change in the Yeats elegy itself. "O: all, in the darkness, agree/ A dark cold day" has become, "What instruments we have agree/ Granted, we do not have all the instruments: to say so is perhaps a stroke for modernization and truth. But the poem has stopped singing. "This Loved One", a very early poem which Yeats anthologized, used to address a "Face that the sun/Is supple on". "We are now to favour" face that the sun/Is supple on. Here it is surely sound and sound alone that disturbs the rewriting poet. And we did hear a slight drone in the short vowel sounds: yet it seemed right for the mostly drowsy mood of these lines. The hopeless correction is a fine flower of poetic diction.

In the mid-1940s Auden began, in bracing moral tones and on every possible occasion, to lay down the laws of modesty proper to the poet. Poetry, he had said, makes nothing open. Nothing, that is, in particular, nothing right away, nothing to be on one's mind. In fact, he gathered too many of these perfectly balanced appeals for the

poetry of griefs against the poetry of grievances. But Auden went considerably further than this. In prose and in verse, he gave perhaps the most limited description of the aim and use of poetry that has ever come from a major poet: in his ideal world poetry is among the more harmless indoor pastimes. And of course there is a matter-of-fact equality in this view of poetry, and it made a pleasant change from the climate of Yeats and Eliot. Very successfully, Auden became the virtuoso of modesty. In art as in life, however, modesty must never be confused with sincerity. There is something bullying in Auden's desire to ingratiate, and he is out to bully himself as well as others. Here one reaches the heart of his impulse to revise. For, more than most poets, Auden in every phase was concerned to be the useful man, the man society cannot dispense with: first as the voice from the tripod, then as the licensed jester. There was an element of pathos in his quest. And if one holds the full career in mind, one will see how pervasive was his fear of the "other" as he was realizing, not from a conflict between one manner and its successor, but from an anxiety, which has become almost a ruling passion, about manners in general.

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The mark of his best early poetry is the widely distributed shock. Others have tried it and will try it. To finish that which they did not begin! Their fate must always be the same as yours, Holders of one position, wrong or right. We once read of a similar defeat in "History to the defeated/ may say alas but cannot help or pardon." But there it does not work. Auden's self-criticism as usual is disingenuous: "To say this is to equate goodness with success. It would have been better, perhaps, if I had never held this wicked doctrine, but that I should have stated it simply because it sounded to me rhetorically effective is quite inexcusable."

In fact, the sentiment is consistent with everything Auden believed about history. The trouble is rather that these lines resist any historical context. They are brilliantly anonymous, the feeling they impart is far from local, and they should not have been kept for the end of "Spain". Who are the "old gang" that must be killed off in Auden's early poems? Those, the poems continually assert, who have been possessed by a bad motive. The behaviour they are denounced for extends from the stakes of the sword to the summits of political oppression. The drawing together of two vastly different sorts of corruption, that which comes of power and that which comes of fear, is an astonishing feature of Auden's ideology. In fact, it has not ceased to be a puzzling, difficult, and unexplained part of his thought. Yet none of the poems connected with this lapse is without

canonical status. And we can still read the ballad of "Miss Gee" - Miss Gee, who, being too meek to live and too thwarted, grows a cancer and dies - and we can applaud the flat pitiless gaze of the poet. They laid her on the table, And Mr Rose the surgeon He cut Miss Gee in half. Mr Rose he turned to his students, Said, "Gentlemen, if you please, We seldom see a sarcoma As far advanced as this."

Or perhaps we will shudder a little, and not for the reason the poet intended. It is such an odd choice of targets for an exercise in nihilism. Courage, or the courage of these particular convictions, together with an unworried pertinacity in the campaign to disgust, Auden learnt from D. H. Lawrence. To disgust on behalf of the truth was permissible since the truth, as Lawrence taught, was often in bad taste. The reader who wants a key to the attitude of Auden's early work and to his later work, as he himself realized, will come upon the Leader, the Group, the Wrecked Society, the Disease-Growing, the War to the End of the Pure-in-Spirit. "The Wanderer" has its source in one of Lawrence's characteristic improvements: about the peace that belongs to the hero returning home. "Consider" with its celebration of the hawk's-eye view in which an absence of compassion is notable and to be admired, looks back to several passages looked with friction:

We can see as the hawk sees the one concentrated spot where beats the life-heart of our prey. This is the Love is a thing to be learned, through centuries of patient effort. It is a difficult, complex, maintenance of individual integrity throughout the incalculable processes of interhuman polarity. Who can do it? Nobody. Yet we have all got to it, for we all suffer ascetic tortures of starvation and privation or of distortion and overstrain and slow collapse into corruption. But Auden can touch us as Lawrence's crank manifesto cannot. And his moods of disgust take from the surrounding poems or lines a resonance not simply of disgust. One sees the moods, in the end, as frank confessions of weakness, of failure, of his own indebtedness to the system of illusions he hates and would dispel. For the band of heroic conspirators who have treated him as plainly shadowed rather than shadowing, among the watched not the watchers. They are surely as Miss Gee are headed for defeat; but they of all others cannot accept it. Their fate reads out in sentences, simple and laconic like the end-stroke of a line of verse, in poems that do not strike the tragic note yet have the tragic need to step quietly, For to be held as friend By an undeveloped mind, To be joke for children is Death's happiness. Whose anecdote heary His favourite colour is blue, Colour of distant bells And boy's overalls.

Few of Auden's grateful readers have been tempted to solve the paradox of an angry poetry which is most confident and most beautiful when it is most cautious. The gratitude seems enough. I decent with the seasons, move Different or with a different love, Nor question overmuch the nad. The stone smile of this country god That never was more recitent, Always afraid to say more than it meant. Here at least one ought to trust the tale. Auden's poetry knows what its author sometimes forgot: that what it seeks to join - life and death, isolate horror and the sense of community - must remain forever parted; there is nothing to be joined. And this knowledge brings to Auden's early poetry its unique dignity and its air of self-criticism, and unexplained, even

Much of what Auden wrote between "The Letter" (1927) and "On This Island" (1935) has kept its original vigour. The best of these poems, untitled at birth but eccentrically christened in their after-years, come back to the memory whole from the sound of their first lines: "From scars where kestrels hover"; "Again in conversations/ Speaking of fear"; "Before this loved one/Was that one and that one"; "The strings' excitement, the applauding drum"; "Will you turn a deaf ear/To what they said on the shore"; "Since you are going to begin today/Let us consider what it is you do"; "It is as though I walked in the public gardens"; "This lunar beauty/Has no history"; "O where are you going" said reader to rider"; "Consider this and in our time"; "Doom is dark and deeper than any seadingle"; "Tearing of harvests rotting in the valleys"; and the terrifying and unforgettable refusal to forgive a happy childhood, called "Through the Looking-Glass", which begins: "Earth has turned over; our side feels the cold/And life sinks creaking in the wells of ice". On these poems rests Auden's claim as one of the great inventors of modern poetry. Leafing through Robin Skelton's anthology, *Poetry of the Thirties*, and hearing Auden in the thirties, as he usually realized, as MacNeice's "The Sunlight on the Garden" and Henry Reed's "Hiding Beneath the Furze", one feels his influence as an invigorating fact.

Auden is at his height perhaps only in *Paid on Both Sides*, the one verse drama of our time that is really verse and really drama. The Newer Shakespearian gives Auden a sustained glimpse of the individual operating within the group, and the flaw at the heart of all human action is laid bare. We fight others in the name of ancestors whom we are fighting to escape. This is the war. Our loyalty to all "Whose voices in the rock/Are now perpetual" is always necessary and always destructive. The self-imposed alibi is here treated as an appropriate emblem of sick ancestor-worship: the Doctor cures the wounded spy by removing from his body an enormous tooth, which "was growing ninety-nine years before a great grandfather was born. It is had's been taken out today he would have died yesterday". And the final chorus is our nearest approach to an Auden credo.

Though he believe it, no man is so sure of his sword as the fortunate. To bring home a wife, to live long. But he is defeated; let the son Sell the farm lest the mountain fall; His mother and her mother won. His fields are used up where the moles visit; The contours worn flat; if there of all others cannot accept it. Their fate reads out in sentences, simple and laconic like the end-stroke of a line of verse, in poems that do not strike the tragic note yet have the tragic need to step quietly, For to be held as friend By an undeveloped mind, To be joke for children is Death's happiness. Whose anecdote heary His favourite colour is blue, Colour of distant bells And boy's overalls.

To move from this to the aggressive middle style of 1935-45 is a bewildering drop. Auden has become the good poet of responsibility: the vagueness is in the role, not the phrase, and no number of capital letters would save it. The style now is Dryden plus contemporary journalism. Stretches of *For the Time Being*, especially Herod's speech, are in the mode of Jean Anouilh's understated Greek tragedy. Yet Auden's conspiratorial phase hints directly enough at his later courtship of the social muse: the progress has its logic. The missing link is, of course, the *Order*, which one may hope the English Auden will reprint in toto. The Almanac of that story makes his sacrifice not from strength but from weakness, and the drama reaches its climax in the "Letter to a Woman" where the wounded man's love for his own limiting defect allows it, after endless considering, to establish complete domination over his mental life. In Auden's view the case is reversed: the "Letter" is the "Letter".

In the end, the collected volume, Auden's own growing steadily convinced that society is itself a

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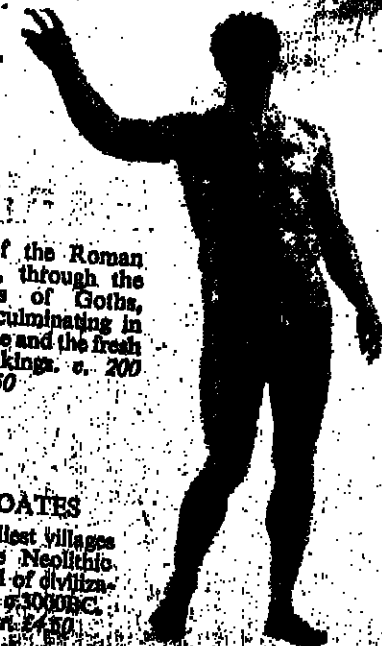
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EDWARD MENDELSON (Editor):
W. H. Auden: Collected Poems
696pp. Faber and Faber. £7.50.

This is the Auden canon as planned by Auden. The poet who was apt to deride "accurate scholarship" would nevertheless have been pained with the editorial job: the *Collected Poems* supplies dates and variant titles, but otherwise keeps the apparatus to a helpful minimum, and is good to the eye and the touch. We shall have to wait for a promised second volume. The canon as a palimpsest, compare the rubbed-out edges with the bold outline laid over them, and arrive at some conclusion about the poet's character. In the meantime Auden, wisely, wisely, wisely, cannot do more than to regard Auden's final change of dress as indeed final. It is. But a few irascible spirits ought to remain on the scene to ask if this was not the last of Auden's desire to be a poet. In the meantime Auden, wisely, wisely, wisely, cannot do more than to regard Auden's final change of dress as indeed final. It is. But a few irascible spirits ought to remain on the scene to ask if this was not the last of Auden's desire to be a poet.

Auden generally revised for sentiment rather than sound, and, without being an exponent of "pure sound", one may raise a simple enough objection. To play the sage or pedant, and chasten the record of an earlier rhapsodic self, is never good for the character; the results, when it is a poet who does this, are seldom happy for the poetry; and Auden is an exception to neither rule. Poetry survives, he said, in his elegy for Yeats. "In the valley of its making where executives/ Would never want to tamper." Poets are the first to tamper. Consider the following inconspicuous change in "Reynolds Mould":
It is the sorrow; shall it melt?
Ah, water
Would gush, flush, green these
mountains and these valleys,
And we rebuild our cities, not dream
of islands.

The altered version gives us, it is our sorrow. It is an emphatic bit of writing, and what is gained is emphasis. But the loss is very great: the poem has given up something of its tact strength. "Our sorrow", it insists, "yes; all of us." What was implication is now statement. Our and sorrow, by the way, do not mix well as sounds. And our slows down the cadence, where, in the first version, it was slowed and then halted, as if stunned, only at sorrow, the last word of the first sentence of the envoy.

More painful and harder to miss is a change in the Yeats elegy itself. "I am a stroke of lightning/ agree/ the day of his death was a dark cold day" has become "What instruments we have agree/ Granted, we do not have all the instruments: to say so is perhaps a stroke of lightning and much. But the poem has stopped singing. "This Loved One", a very early poem which Yeats anthologized, used to address a "face that the sun/Is sipping on". We are now to favour "Face that the sun/Is sipping on". Here it is surely sound and pound alone that disturbs the ravishing poet. And we did hear a slight drone in the short vowel sounds: yet it seemed right for the mostly dreary mood of these lines. The hopeless correction is a fine flower of poetic diction.

In the mid-1940s Auden began, in bracing moral tones and on every possible occasion, to lay down the laws of modesty proper to the poet. Poetry, he said, makes nothing happy. Nothing, that is, in particular, nothing right away, nothing to be on; one might have gathered too, from his earlier, more perfectly balanced appeal for the

poetry of grief, against the poetry of grievances. But Auden went considerably further than this. In prose and in verse, he gave perhaps the most limited description of the aim and use of poetry that has ever come from a major poet: in his ideal world poetry is among the more harmless indoor pastimes. And of course there is a matter-of-fact equality in this view of poetry, and it made a pleasant change from the claims of Yeats and Eliot. Very successfully Auden became the virtuoso of modesty. In art as in life, however, modesty must never be confused with sincerity. There is something bullying in Auden's desire to bully himself as well as others. Here one reaches the heart of his impulse to revise. For, more than most poets, Auden in every phase was concerned to be the useful man, the man society cannot dispense with: first as the voice from the tripod, then as the licensed jester. There was an element of pathos in his quest. And if one holds the full career in mind, one will see how far he was from his fear of isolation: the revisions are issuing, not from a conflict between one manner and its successor, but from an anxiety, which has become almost a ruling passion, about manners in general.

"Human beings", announces the narrator of *The Age of Anxiety*, "are, necessarily, actors who cannot become something before they have first pretended to be it; and they can be divided, not into the hypocritical and the sincere, but into the sane who know they are acting and the mad who do not." What a very strange generalization. Play-acting, one might object, simply does not have so central a place in the lives of most of us. But to Auden the dictum seemed self-evidently true. Baudelaire writes of the aristocratic pleasure of giving offence: "equally aristocratic is the pleasure of having it in one's power to offend but holding back. And Auden's earliest effort, in which he sought to offend all and, at last, in which he offended none, were not markedly different in the demands they made on the player. Both entailed a steady awareness of the risks and attendant rewards of authority. The first was the word of command with its rival connotations of power and trustworthiness, was not lost on Auden. Of his own uneasy stance he made his poetry.

The mark of his best early poetry is the wretchedly distributed shock. Others have tried it and will try again. To finish that which they did not begin: Their fate must always be the same as yours. To suffer the loss they were afraid of, yes. Holders of one position, were they for years. We once read of a similar defeat in "History to the defeated/ may say alas but cannot help or pardon." But there it does not work. Auden's self-criticism as usual is disingenuous:

To say this is to equate goodness with success. It would have been hard enough if I had ever held this wicked doctrine, but that I should have stated it simply because it sounded to me rhetorically effective is quite inexcusable.

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Courage, or the courage of these particular convictions, together with an unworried pertinacity in the campaign to disgust Auden learnt from D. H. Lawrence. To disgust on behalf of the truth was permissible since the truth, as Lawrence taught, was often in bad taste. The reader who wants a key to the attitude of Auden's early work and finds himself resisting those enjoyable but esoteric psychologists, Groddeck and Homer Lane, can do no better than to look up Lawrence's *Psychology and the Unconscious* and his sequel *Seven Years of Solitude*. There he will come upon the Leader, the Group, the Wrecked Society, the Disease-Growing Neurotic, the War to the End of the Pure-In-Spirit. The Wanderer has his source in one of Lawrence's characteristic improvised arias, about the peace that belongs to the hero returning home. "Consider", with its celebration of the hawk's-eye view in which an absence of compassion is notable and to be admired, looks back to passages loaded with

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Few of Auden's grateful readers have been tempted to solve the paradox of an angry poetry which is most confident and most beautiful where it is most cautious. The gratitude seems enough. I decent with the seasons, move Different or with a different love, Nor question overmuch the nod. The stone smile of this country god That never was more reluctant Always afraid to say more than it meant.

Here at least one ought to trust the tale. Auden's poetry knows what its author sometimes forgot: that what it seeks to join - life and death, solitary heroism and the sense of community - must remain grooved, parted. There is nothing to be done. And this knowledge brings to Auden's early poetry its unique dignity and its air of self-sufficiency and unapproached beauty. Much of what Auden wrote be-

tween "The Letter" (1927) and "On This Island" (1935) has kept its original vigour. The best of these poems, untitled at birth but eventually christened in their after-years, come back to the monomyth whole from the sound of their first lines: "From scars where kestrels hover"; "Again in conversations/ Speaking of fear"; "Before this loved one/ Was that one and that one"; "The strings' excitement, the applauding drum"; "Will you turn a deaf ear/ To what they said on the shore"; "Since you are going to begin today/ Let us consider what it is you do"; "It was Easter as I walked in the public gardens"; "This lunar beauty/ His no history"; "O where are you going/ said reader to rider"; "Consider this and in our time is dark and deeper than any single"; "Hearing of harvests rotting in the valleys"; and the terrifying and unforgettable refusal to forgive a happy childhood, called "Through the Looking-Glass" which begins: "Earth has turned over; our side feels the cold/ And life sinks/ hoking in the wells of trees." On these poems rests Auden's claim as one of the great inventors of modern poetry. Looking through Robin Skelton's anthology, *Poetry of the Thirties*, and hearing the poet himself, individually realized as MacNeice's "The Sunlight on the Garden" and Henry Reed's "Hiding - Beneath the Furze", one feels his influence as an invigorating fact.

Auden is at his height perhaps only in *Paid on Both Sides*, the one verse drama of our time that is really verse and really drama. The Weaver-Shaw feud gives Auden a sustained glimpse of the individual operating within the group, and the flaw at the heart of all human action is laid bare. We fight others in the name of our ancestors who we are fighting to escape. This is the trap. Our loyalty to all "Whose voices in the rock/ Ace now perpetual" is always necessary and always destructive. The self-imposed alibi, here treated humorously, and tellingly, as an appropriate emblem of sick ancestor-worship; the Doctor cures the wounded spy by removing from his body an enormous tooth, which was growing ninety-nine years before his great-grandmother was born. If it hadn't been taken out today he would have died yesterday. And the final chorus is our nearest approach to an Auden credo.

Though he believe it; no man is He thinks to be called the fortunate. To bring home a wife, to live long.

But he is defeated; let the soul Sell the farm lest the mountain fall;

His mother and her mother won. His fields are used up where the moles visit, if there show.

Passage for water he will miss it: Give up his breath, his woman, his team;

No life to touch, though later there be Big fruit, eagles above-the stream.

To move from this to the aggressive-middle style of 1935-45 is a bewildering drop. Auden has become the good poet of responsibility; the vagueness in the role, not the phrase, and no number of capital letters would save it. The style now is Dryden plus contemporary journalism. Stretches of *For the Time Being*, especially Harold's speech, are in the mode of least attractive understatement of Greek tragedy. Yet Auden's conspiratorial phase hints directly enough at his later courtship of the social muse: the progress has its logic. The passing link is, of course, the *Order*, which one may hope The Alchemist of that story makes his sacrifice not from strength but from weakness, and the drama reaches its climax in the Letter to a Woman where the wounded man's love for his own limiting defect allows it, after endless cozening, to establish complete domination over his mental life. In the end, Auden's poetry is a restorative - he primes the "Letter" operatively in his first collected volume. And in the mid-1930s his poetry shows him growing steadily convinced that society is itself

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conspiracy of weaknesses from which the individual cannot escape. By 1942 his conversion is wholehearted.

We must all live in a world that is the sum of all those things we cannot do. This is what Auden says, tirelessly, in every possible context. But his diagnosis is not altered. It is only that the prognosis has turned pessimistic. With a curious fidelity to his old beliefs, he was able to change sides without ever changing his mind. The lesson he discovers in Melville belongs properly to himself.

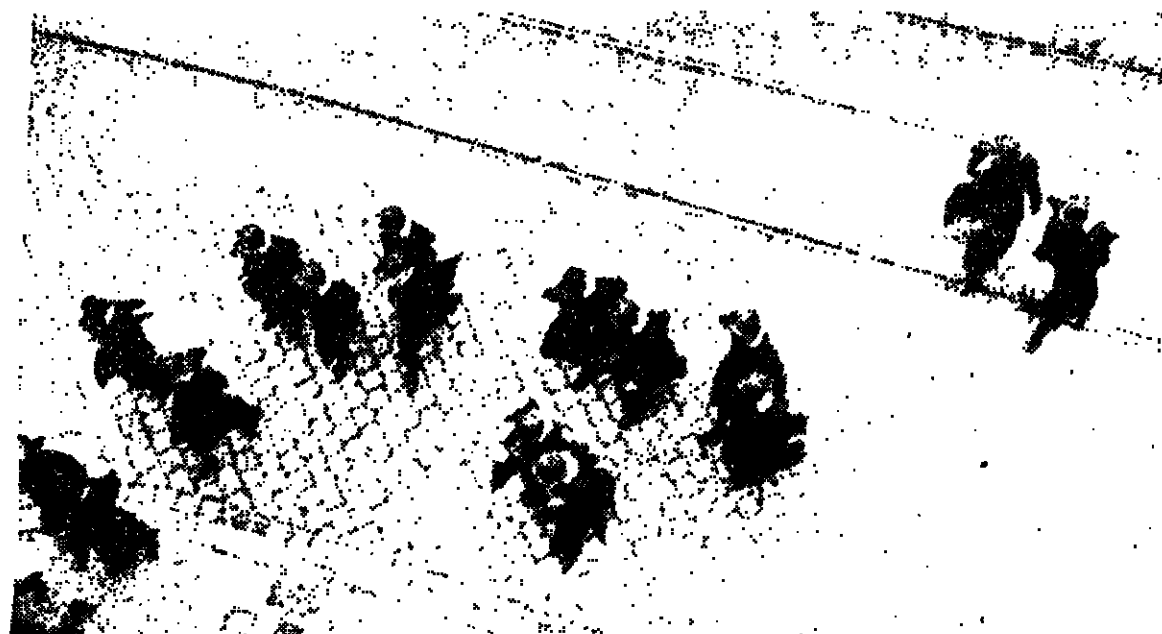
Evil is unspectacular and always human, And shares our bed and eats at our own table, And we are introduced to Goodness every day, Even in drawing-rooms and a crowd of fools; He has a name like Billy and is almost perfect, But wears a stammer like a decoration; And every time they meet the same thing has to happen; It is the Evil that is helpless like a lover And has to pick a quarrel and, And both are openly destroyed before our eyes.

Society, the family, have triumphed, with all their capacity for evil, we can only give them our pledge. Sympathy is the gift Auden has come most keenly to desire in his poetry, and it is, he seems to think, a quality more nearly allied to prose than to poetry. In the recent lines of his elegy for Pound, he brings the which-side-am-I-supposed-to-be-on theme to a final resolution.

But he would have us remember most of all to be enthusiastic over the night, not only for the sense of wonder it alone has to offer, but also because it needs our love. With large sad eyes its delectable creatures look and beg

us dumbly to ask them to follow: they are exiles who long for the future that lies in our power; they too would rejoice if allowed to serve enlightenment like him, even to bear our cry of "Judas".

As he did and all must bear who serve it. Of Auden's "fellow-traveller" phase nothing need be said, since, according to his wish, and the present volume, it never happened. In *Letter to Lord Byron and New Year Letter* we are overhauling a charming conversational wit who will doubtless be equally charming to readers a century from now. The



Auden's Germany—a Munich street in 1930 photographed by Tim Gidal, from his exhibition "In the Thirties" at the Photographers' Gallery, 8 Great Newport Street, London WC2, until September 28. Tim Gidal, born in Munich in 1909, was (with his brother George) one of the first great photo-reporters. The 105 photographs in the exhibition, which has been shown at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, illustrate the period preceding the Nazi regime in Europe, with street scenes from Israel, Italy and Poland as well as Germany. In a picture of 1939 Denis and Masaryk confer on a sofa with a map of Europe on the wall behind; from the same year, on another wall, a British bowler hat and umbrella lie abandoned.

Age of Anxiety is a long dull forced amusements dedicated and devoted to Betjeman. But there remain three poems, in a wholly new manner, in which one feels that Auden is writing at the top of his powers. The manner is that of the oracle who unhappily knows too much; the poems are "The Fall of Rome", "Under Sirius", and "The Shield of Achilles". The first of these has something of the spirit of Dryden's *Secular Masque*. For technical precision over a short distance it scarcely has a rival in Auden's work or in anyone else's. The American rhyme of clerk with work is cunning, and identifies the empire whose careless largesse Auden is elsewhere at pains to celebrate.

"Under Sirius" is a rhetorical flourish, executed in a single stroke, which warns the lady epic poet Fortunatus of his coming disaster. "Improve the man," Auden says, here as elsewhere, "by giving him good fright." This poem makes the grandest of all his gestures of veiled menace.

How will you look and what will you do when the basalt Tombs of the sorcerers shatter And their guardian megalopods Come after you pitter-patter? How will you answer when from their quaking spring The immortal nymphs fly, And out of the open sky The pantomimic riddle breaks—

"Who are you and why?" For when in a carol under the apple-trees The reborn feastly dance There will also, Fortunatus, Be those who refused their chance, Now pottering shades, querulous beside the salt-pits, And mawkish in their wits, To whom these dull dog-days Between event seem crowned with olive.

And golden with self-praise. "The Shield of Achilles," written perhaps under the influence of Simone Weil's "The Iliad or, The Poem of Force," mingles the grey world of the death camps with the thriving civilization depicted on the shield, until neither is quite recognizable and both seem appalling. Only Auden would play Cassandra to Achilles in this way. The anachronistic details are deftly managed and the poem is a careful tour de force.

Apart from these poems, *Paid on Both Sides*, and some lyrics in his first volume or a little after, Auden can be seen to best advantage in his songs. "Fish in the untruffled lake"; "Now the leaves are falling fast"; "Underneath an abject love"; "Make this night loveable"; and the poem to which it is sequel and counterpoint, "Lullaby," these are intent on themselves as true poetry must be.

Yet the faithful reader of Auden will find such a list ungenerous, and he is right. A poet is someone who invents a new tone of voice. Early, middle, and late, Auden was busy doing so: in "Hymn to the State" in parts of the *Fraud and Years* elegies, in the calm equipoise and tact of *The Sea and the Mirror*, and in "Bucolics" and "Ilionae Canonicae," which are his unofficial farewell to the art. One may watch him "doing" Graves or Frost in poems as late as "Limbo Culture" and "Objects" (1957); but what was closest to him he learnt early, most of all from Hardy; and his typical poem like Hardy's starts from a meditation which must be idiosyncratic on a landscape which must be difficult. Hardy's "When the Picnic Was" and Auden's "From scars where kestrels hover" are employing remarkably similar methods to remarkably different ends. In *Poems*, then, for his criticism, survives as a testament of the healing power of things beyond the human thrall.

Auden frequently lacks the sounded or line-by-line concentration that one associates with the greatest modern poets. But he has a subject uniquely to himself. The skeleton-key quest, the quest toward a goal. The conventional detective story, he wrote in *The Dyer's Hand*, assumes a world in which "it is certain that a crime has been com-

mitted and, temporarily, unaccounted for, to whom the guilt should be attached, as soon as this is known, the innocence of everyone else is certain." A work of art such as *The Trial*, on the other hand, assumes a world in which "it is not guilt that is certain and the crime that is uncertain; the aim of the hero's investigation (which would be possible for he knows he is guilty) but to discover what, if anything, he has done to make himself guilty. There are critics who will prefer to call this the Kafka theme or the Child Roland theme. But of the contemporaries, it was Auden who appropriated it most thoroughly and self-consciously.

It is the subtle and artful form of the confidence game which he plays artlessly in his revisions. It is his anxiety free rein, without the deceptions of simple exhortation, the illudices of confession. It is the sense in full figure the threat of his nervous sense of duty and his vision: yet we feel the threat of something named, informed by dramatic energy, and mastered. In a poem of 1936 Auden received a definition last word from his accuser, Scott of the Group, the *Supremo*, the *Old*, had long since become the "the" impersonable and unreflecting of never to be questioned, whom he shares with Kafka and Edward. From "moonless absences you heard of" they, who have no everything, are now asking for surrender. And Auden, he knew, their still, waits the battle of time and cults the poem "The Will Be No Peace".

There will be no peace. Flight back, then, with such courage as you have, Clear in your conscience on their cause, if they had it nothing to them now. They hate for hate's sake.

But he had answered himself in decades earlier. The choice of weapons is really no choice. In mere reflex. And at last, as one, Auden's few inspired remarks, makes clear, we are the victims, our own survival. Clear, unarguable, ahead of the mountains of instead, None more could cascade down. We must make ourselves at home with whatever illusions of the past we have, a savage, hence cheerful welcome accorded to all as a value in itself. The poem is one seen how shrewdly and yet so curiously, like the rest of us, Auden built the church of self-knowledge, the rock of his own alienation, nature. While remaining in the gutter, distinctive himself, he set himself in this sense a representative case.

The Yankee Demosthenes

By Marcus Cunliffe

CHARLES M. WILTSE (Editor):
The Papers of Daniel Webster
Correspondence: Volume 2, 1789-1824.
518pp. Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, \$17.50.

Can a man be a folk hero who is also a lawyer and a politician? Yes, at least in the American context if like Abe Lincoln he is self-made and speaks for the common man. The problem of Daniel Webster is more difficult. His origins were right. He was born in a log cabin, in the New Hampshire back country; the family had to skip to find the modest two hundred dollars required for his college education at Dartmouth; he worked as a village schoolmaster to help support his brother, who followed him at Dartmouth. On the other hand, Daniel Webster won fame in the law by championing the sanctity of private property, and as a politician—first in the House of Representatives and later the Senate—as a New England Federalist and Whig; the aristocracy, according to opponents.

His contemporaries were sometimes not sure what to make of him. Historians too have been uncertain. The folk hero side is well brought out in various contexts by his fellow New Englander, Ralph Waldo Emerson. In 1820, when Webster was thirty-eight and Emerson was at Harvard, the young undergraduate recorded a character sketch by a Boston lawyer. Webster

possesses an admirable readiness, a fine memory and a faculty of perfect abstraction, an unparalleled impudence and a tremendous power of concentration—he brings all that he has ever heard, read or seen to bear on the case in question. . . . He knows his strength, has a perfect confidence in his own powers. . . . He marks his path out, and will cut off fifty heads rather than turn out of it; but is generous and free from malice, and will never . . . make a serious contention. He never laughs, though he is very shrewd and sarcastic, and sometimes sets the whole court in a roar by the singularity or pointedness of a remark. His imagination is what the lawyer calls a furnace to his heat, a necessary attendant.

Courage, force, eloquence, simplicity: these were Emerson's criteria in his lifelong search for the heroic American individual. He was fascinated by the mutuality of speaker and audience, or of the exception and the ordinary. As late as 1843, when Webster was a national celebrity and a big spender (in excess of his means), he still appeared as a giant, as splendidly natural as Niagara. His expositoryness Emerson noted as "a necessary evil" to him. Were he too prudent a Yankee it would be a sad deduction from his magnificence. I only wish he would never trundle; I do not care how much he spends."

This is the phenomenon portrayed in Stephen Vincent Benét's story "The Devil and Daniel Webster," in which by a supreme feat of oratory the lawyer successfully defends a New Hampshire farmer who has sold his soul but wishes to renounce the bargain. It is the Webster who gained glory with his argument in the *Dartmouth College case* (1818-19); his bicentennial commemoration of the Plymouth landing (1820), of which John Adams said: "If there be an American who can read it without tears, I am not that American." His performance before the Supreme Court in such cases as *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) and *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824). It is the patriot who was to awe his listeners at a Bunker Hill ceremony in 1825, in his plea for the Union in the great Webster-Hayne Senate debate of 1830. Of this Webster, at his death in 1852, Emerson could write: "He brought the strength of a savage into the height of culture. . . . Cities had not hurt him; he held undiminished the power and terror of his strength, the majesty of his demeanour."

How though are we to square the "godlike Daniel" with the conventional of convention (and occasionally difficult attitudes, the

attorney for the second Bank of the United States, at times seething with presidential ambition, growing naively into bibulous and (according to rumour) sexually promiscuous? Emerson, for one, accepted that Webster "sometimes commits crimes, but without any guilt": excess coupled with self-assurance was the essential feature of the man. The circhosis of the liver from which Webster died could be regarded almost as a Promethean punishment.

But there was also, in the view of exacting New Englanders, a moral deterioration. Even in the act of praising Webster, Emerson's diary is apt to record reservations. He confesses he can no longer read Webster's printed speeches. Formidable in personality, with his "great cinderous eyes," Webster also reveals "the American blight." He remains, "like the literary class, only a commentator a mediocrity all the while for being a golden one. But the ultimate condemnation was that Webster did trundle, especially by compromising with slavery. In Emerson, James Parton and others of the age, Webster finally betrayed himself and therefore his countrymen. He was a fallen folk hero. "Black Dan," so named for his dark hair and complexion, was perhaps a Lucifer. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. has observed with reference to the Benét story that Webster was hardly the man to argue against the inviolability of a contract. Historians contend that whether he won or lost a case—and he quite often lost—Webster was nearly always on the moneyed side. In court his deeds were usually about deeds.

No doubt Webster's America, certainly his New England, expected too much. They demanded genius (John Adams, no flatterer, exulted after the Plymouth address that Webster had ousted Edmund Burke as "the most consummate Orator of modern times"). They looked for a new old-model statesman to prove their generation matched that of George Washington, a democratic demigod to demonstrate the peculiar excellence of the United States to a sceptical Europe. They sought invincible prowess, forensic endurance and brilliance, akin to the qualities their descendants would worship in the realm of organized sport. They expected moral instruction as ample and authoritative as the sermons preached by their ancestors. "Our New England prosperity and importance are passing away," Daniel wrote to his brother in 1816. "He was thinking of moving. . . . If any great scenes are to be acted in this country, New York is the place. . . . Acutely worried by the decline of their region, New Englanders wished for a paladin to do battle for them—to vindicate their heritages, to exemplify their courage and enterprise, to protect their industries as well as their honour proper. Could any man fulfil so many different expectations? Could anyone successfully embody both spiritual and material hopes, express both sectional and national pride?"

Webster's astonishing achievement was to soar so high in American esteem and remain aloft so long. How he managed this is a fascinating question. One explanation, already suggested, is that his nation desired him to play the roles he himself desired to play. The folk hero's garb was ready for him, the applause and tears only required the appropriate stimulus. Here Emerson is a significant witness. The frequent praise of Webster is remarkable when we consider that almost nobody met Emerson's austere standards. He was by those standards indulgent to Webster, as if impelled to give him the benefit of the doubt. Most nationalists are, in the cynical American term, "available men." Emerson, like many of his contemporaries, treated Daniel Webster as if he were very near to being the indispensable man.

A second answer is that Webster was extraordinarily gifted and likeable. He did not quit New England in 1816, but merely moved from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Boston, Massachusetts. Except to the anti-slavery element, his loyalty to New England was never at issue. Neither was his talent as a trial lawyer. By mid-1824 his associates at the bar acknowledged he had no superior.

His oratory, too, in an age of experienced listeners, was recognized as outstanding. Emerson's disavowal must be set in context. He compared Webster in print, not the living man in full spate, with "the language of the street," adding with Emersonian rigour: "I know nobody among my contemporaries except Carlyle who writes with any sinew and vivacity comparable to Plutarch and Montaigne." Yet by the canons of the day Webster too was a direct, unpretentious performer: he had worked hard to simplify his style, which was appreciably less florid than that of accustomed public speakers such as Rufus Choate and Edward Everett.

People who met Webster were impressed by him as a presence. Elizabeth Hoar talked with Webster in 1843. "As one likes to go behind the Niagara Falls, so I tried to look into those fanned caverns of eyes, and the whole man was magnificent." Emerson, who saw him in Concord at the same period, said: "Webster behaves admirably well in Society. These village parties must be disshowering him, yet he shows himself just good-natured, just nonchalant enough, and has his own way without offending any one or losing any ground." He was a power in the land, but without pomposity. He was known to be generous and careless with money. His reliance on wealthy friends was forgiven because otherwise he would have been bankrupt. He bore the death of children, and of his first wife, with dignity. He did not sink in face of political disappointments, even though he had to watch lesser men than himself installed in the White House.

The frustrations multiplied as he grew older. His second marriage had been less than idyllic. The loss of a son in the Mexican War, a war he criticized as a piece of Southern expansionism, was a hard blow. He could reach high cabinet rank; but sectional controversy made it impossible for him, as for Clay, Calhoun and Van Buren, to please both their own regions and the nation as a whole. Genuinely devoted to the idea of the Union, he continued to quarrel with the South—and was accused of having sold his New England birthright.

Some of the aspects that contemporaries adored are no longer vivid to us. In this respect he resembles a bygone actor or singer. In the twentieth century most American historians, casting their eyes at Webster, castigate him as a Whig, interpreted so as to fit the pattern. It is true that he was no warrior for the working class. Yet he was authentically self-made. His conservatism was not exclusive; many of the poor took him for a Yankee folk hero. He was an imperfect representative of the role, who also in his era was better qualified? Andrew Jackson was a slaveholder, and an arrogant president. Orestes Brownson, a passionate spokesman for America's artisans, reversed his position after 1840. Abe Lincoln was still in the wings; but we should remember that he too was a committed Whig.

Perhaps Emerson was right in describing Daniel Webster, somewhat pejoratively, as "very good America." But surely this is only to emphasize how various he was, how much a key figure, and so how deserving of close study. The last attempt at a full collection of his writings, the "National edition", dates back to 1903. It ran to eighteen volumes. Our generation has seen large-scale scholarly publication of the papers of Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, Clay, Calhoun and others. Webster is of their company and merits similar treatment.

As an advocate of sensible compromise, he would have appreciated the canny and logical approach of the editors of the new set of *Papers of Daniel Webster*, based at his alma mater Dartmouth College. Thus, they only project a total of about fourteen volumes, plus a cumulative index volume. Seven of the volumes, of which this is the first, will be devoted to his correspondence, three to legal material, two to his diplomatic activities, and two more to his

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Constable

speeches and formal writings. Rather than print every scrap of Websteriana—a slow, inordinately expensive, and perhaps pedantic exercise—the editors have been selective.

Specialists are referred to the microfilm edition (1971) of Webster's correspondence, also prepared by Professor Witte, for which there is a printed guide. Each letter in the *Papers* bears a microfilm reference number, and the whole collection is calendared, volume by volume. Incoming as well as outgoing correspondence is included. Editorial notes, with adequate and accurate, have not been allowed to get out of hand. This first volume incorporates the autobiographical sketch, going up to about 1817, that Webster wrote in 1829, and the notes he dictated after a visit to Thomas Jefferson in 1824.

The decision to be selective seems correct. There are disadvantages in separating the correspondence from Webster's other writings. Allusions to court cases or to quotations make us want to turn to them. But a strictly chronological arrangement would have been cumbersome and sometimes confusing. The legal and diplomatic papers will benefit from the professional expertise of particular editors. Possibly the speeches and other formal writings could have been printed in sequence with the correspondence, more or less as has been done with the *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*. A reason for not largely so may be that Webster relied on a stenographer's shorthand, and then polished and expanded what he recollected having said, sometimes several months afterwards, as with the Plymouth address (John Adams's congratulatory letter, a response to the printed version, was a year later than the speech).

All in all, however, this is an exemplary beginning to a worthwhile task.

So far, though, the new edition contains few surprises, despite the fact that only one-fifth of Webster's letters have previously been printed. The most revealing selection seems to be the letters to Webster's 1856 publication, *Private Correspondence*. Biographers have already made the most of these, of Webster's undoubted plan in a Massachusetts senate when he was serving in Congress during the War of 1812: "You may contribute some way for me to be rich, as soon as there is a peace. What we can discover, in a peace, that such appeals seem to have been uncharacteristic. His early talk of money concerns the precarious finances of the Webster family. Letters to Dartmouth friends are particularly colorful. Before he has got rid of most of the genteel numerisms. The prevailing tone is brisk, genial, resilient. There is no bombast or self-pity. His house burns down, unmarried children there to return to Webster. He tells a friend, in a Washington letter, "When I found myself lost, but House & property, as may well imagine how much I have been relieved from distress." He is scolded for his political and personal opinions, all in the end, energetic, magnanimous spirit. His letters are not colourless or devoid of emotion. They show Webster to have been rather well and nice in private life, as a public figure. Perhaps the next volume will show more dramatically how the little farm boy evolved into the Yankee Demagogue.

Faith and works

By W. R. Ward

FRANK BAKER: From Wesley to Ashbury Studies in Early American Methodism. 223pp. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press. \$9.75.

In this interesting collection of papers, Frank Baker, an Englishman teaching in an American theological faculty, somewhat defensively stages his own bicentennial celebration by insisting upon the British origins of even a distinctively American Methodism: "It is impossible to understand early American Methodism in terms of modern American Methodism. It is only to be understood fully by being constantly in mind that Methodism was a British import." Professor Baker knows more about eighteenth-century Methodist antiquities on both sides of the Atlantic than anyone else, and no historian can fail to learn from him something he did not know about an important question: yet as the author admits in a passage about "the homiletic application of... historical research," this is not a historian's book.

Eighteenth-century American religious history was a province of English scholarship, and the early data, Professor Baker is willing to derive a great deal of Methodism from the lively Club, and not least from the great missionary adventures of a number of its members in Georgia. Wesley's work in Georgia may have had no continuity with American Methodism, but it can at least be put to homiletic use. Yet to imply that the zeal and spiritual attitudes of Wesley's circle in Georgia were not to exist elsewhere in the Church of England, as misleading as to suggest that Wesley's social attitudes there (in isolation from the policies of Georgia Trustees) exemplify Methodist community service. To do him justice, Professor Baker does not suppress the truth. In the informative chapter of the book, on the murky history of the Wesleyan doctrinal deposit in the official standards of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, he entertains a useful line of thought. Editions of authorized editions of interesting Tracts which were entirely unknown to the learned Bishop Doane when he first produced his *Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism*. Such a fortuitous discovery, however, is an entirely only to the practitioners of the linear and doctrinal approach to church history. It is the normal stuff of religious belief and practice on both sides of the Atlantic.

FICTION

Deadlier than the male

By Michael Mason

RAYMOND CHANDLER: The Blue Dahlia A Screenplay. 139pp. Elm Tree Books. £3.95.

If you cannot keep in mind the order in which Raymond Chandler wrote his eight Marlowe novels (including the unfinished "The Poodle Springs Story"), there is an easy way to determine it: list the eight works in alphabetical order, ignoring definite articles, and the sequence is exactly that of their composition. Since the odds against this arrangement being fortuitous, as I calculate them, are over 40,000 to 1 it almost certainly flows from a private and deliberate scheme of the author's. There are many further predictabilities and regularities in the Marlowe novels. Some of these are obvious features of style and content—such as Marlowe's honourableness, and the range of the books' idiom—which have been widely written about both by critics and by Chandler himself. Others, which are no less persistent, do not appear in the orthodox picture of a trio of wartime hard-boiled novelists. Chandler's novels do not conform comfortably with it. Most probably even the author was unaware of these darker, more obsessive recurrences.

For example, a bet that the villain of a Marlowe novel will be a woman would be almost as safe a thing as a bet on the alphabetical placing of its title. Chandler's murderers are aesthetically brutal in proportion to the degree of sexual arousal they produce in Marlowe. Mrs. Grayle (née Velma Valente), who does some serious necking with him on a couch, leaves Lindsay Marriott's brains "on his face"; Ellen Wade, for whom Marlowe is "as erotic as a stallion," reduces Sylvia Lennox's head to "a bloody sponge." These are not the only women Marlowe has sexual relations with, but in the non-murderous cases the wooing is cool and uncarnal, as cool as Silver-wig's lips. Then there is a compensating quality in certain male characters, an upsurge and gentleness just where evil could be expected to concentrate itself: in the giant thug Moose Malloy, or, more curiously, in the Napoleons of Los Angeles crime—Eddie Murs, Laird Brunette, and Alex Morny.

In their physical appearance many of Chandler's characters have sexually anomalous traits: Jessi Florian wears a man's slippers, and Mrs. Mawdock's throat would have looked better in a football sweater. On the other hand Lindsay Marriott's neck is "the neck of a strong woman," and Red Olsen ("probably the nicest man I had ever met") has "eyes like a girl, a lovely girl." Marlowe himself is meant to be unsexed, his femininity being evoked by his feminine traits all have to do with his personality. Of course Chandler intended a tension between Marlowe's inner and outer nature: such an effect is the essence of his characterization. The creature inside the shell is a less strikingly short of maleness, even in some of his most familiar aspects. The celebrated backbeat, for instance, is generally reserved for other males who have Marlowe in their power, when it becomes a kind of hard-boiled flirtatiousness. Marlowe's uprightness is often compounded with misogyny (a Carmen Sternwood's sexuality is more nauseating to him than her father's social ethics). His domestic life is partly chess and booze, but consists equally of fastidious routines of cooking and tidying (he is for ever emptying ashtrays). His homeliness is evoked by a kind of domesticity which is not a kind of hard-boiled flirtatiousness. Marlowe's uprightness is often compounded with misogyny (a Carmen Sternwood's sexuality is more nauseating to him than her father's social ethics). His domestic life is partly chess and booze, but consists equally of fastidious routines of cooking and tidying (he is for ever emptying ashtrays). His homeliness is evoked by a kind of domesticity which is not a kind of hard-boiled flirtatiousness.

This material appears in all the novels, but it does undergo change. Generally speaking, in the dies slide down the alphabet Chandler brings his secret concerns more into the centre of the fictions. The *Long Goodbye* actually contains a conversation about homosexuality—a circumstance sufficiently suggestive to question Chandler's lack of self-awareness about these matters. *Playback*, his next novel and the last complete one, shows an abrupt change of direction; perhaps Chandler was recalling from the point his preoccupations had led him to in this book. Marlowe is trans-

formed almost beyond recognition by a new propensity for aggression and casual lust.

Such developments give an added interest to the fiction that Chandler wrote in between the novels, for here we could expect to see the transitions that separate the Marlowe books being prepared. Filmscripts were Chandler's main alternative activity, and *The Blue Dahlia* of 1946 dates from a time of general change in the form and content of his fiction: when in particular the dense, even melodramatic, plotting and luridly imagistic style of the first three novels was giving way to the untidier stories and more relaxed narration that Chandler favoured in his last decade.

The Blue Dahlia is unlightening on these topics, however. The nub of its plot—a murder committed by the least likely of a restricted group of suspects—belongs firmly in a tradition of mystery-writing that Chandler in his novels strove to modify into a new and more persuasive kind of fiction. Admittedly his first plan for the solution to the mystery anticipates material in one of the novels: the murderer was to have been Buzz Wanchek, Johnny Morrison's brain-damaged comrade-in-arms—thus combining something of Roger Wade (in his amnesia about the crime) and Terry Lennox (also one of a trio of wartime hard-boiled novelists). Chandler was obliged by the Navy Department to abandon the plan for a guilty Buzz, on the grounds of disrespect for the uniform. This act of interference may appear to curtail the novel's complaints, in his letters and elsewhere, about the pressures applied to a Hollywood scriptwriter. In this way he explained the rather dis-

Veldanschauung

By Frank Pike

ANDRE BRINK: An Instant in the Wind 251pp. W. H. Allen. £3.95.

Reminiscence of, if not inspired by, Reinhold White's *Voss*, this ambitious work takes the few recorded facts of an episode of the past to evoke the history and character of two individuals. In 1751, Elisabeth Larsson returned to Cape Town accompanied only by a runaway slave, Adam Mantoor, having set out nearly two years earlier on an expedition into the interior of the Cape. On the way she met her married husband, the Swedish traveller Erik Larsson, an incompetent guide, and a complement of ox-wagons and Hottentot bearers. The guide shot himself after a quarrel, most of the oxen were eaten, and the expedition was abandoned. Finally Larsson walked off into the bush never to reappear. At this point Elisabeth was discovered by Adam Mantoor, and together they began the journey back to the sea.

In narrative terms this novel is simply an account of a relationship between a black man and a white woman, between them and a landscape, and between them and the historical currents which have set them together, almost at opposite ends of the social scale. In an embryonic civilization in southern Africa, as the journey proceeds

Cut and come again

STAN BARSTOW: The Right True End 235pp. Michael Joseph. £3.95.

Whatever happened to Vic Brown, the hero of *Kind of a Sins*? Would you believe a smooth interior national businessman, jetting to Australia and fraternizing with the arty London set? *The Right True End* is Stan Barstow's conclusion of the Vic Brown trilogy. We find Vic Brown in a dead-end marriage, but also, Donna, the actress-mistress, has also fled: pregnant (by another man) to Cornwall. Poor Vic spends the next ten years yearning for his lost love; lamenting "the past and the future I can't see; with marvelous things lying just out of reach."

But the text published here is Chandler's own first draft, and even this is a colourless affair—most surprisingly in the bareness of the passages that describe the scene and character. Only in certain pieces of dialogue between Johnny and Joyce Harwood, which survived into the filmed version, is there any verbal zest (and in these pithy exchanges there is a uniform style that bridges the difference in sex; the idiom which is the whole foundation of Johnny's and Joyce's relationship is sexually a neutral thing).

So Chandler's own indifference was perhaps as much to blame for the relative dullness of *The Blue Dahlia* as the Hollywood system. That he was able, on occasion, to consult personal needs more freely in writing a script is shown by the appearance of some of the characteristic sexual narrative motifs in *The Blue Dahlia* of two years earlier. What then is the value of this publication of *The Blue Dahlia*? Really only that it is Chandler's own draft, different in many places from the filmed script, and thus an authentically literary document, not simply a transcription from a soundtrack. For this reason admirers of Chandler may wish to possess the book. It also reprints from *Harper's* magazine a characteristically suave reminiscence by John Houseman of the making of *The Blue Dahlia*, and concludes with an informative essay by Matthew J. Bruccoli, "Raymond Chandler and Hollywood." This is only flawed by a description of Robert Altman's 1974 *The Long Goodbye* as "an atrocious parody" when in truth this brilliant film was the first cinematic version of a Marlowe novel to discern the hero's sexual nature.

The personal histories emerge: Elisabeth, a daughter of the evolving Cape Dutch petty bourgeoisie, resentful of the aspirations to gentility which restrict her desirable accomplishments to piano-playing and needlework, insisting on marrying Larsson to escape them; Adam, a runaway slave, is made helpless by the master's son, into a vicious flogging, and later banished to Robben Island for striking his master. In their struggling progress across the terrain, losing in succession wagon, coach and almost all their belongings, the pair become a couple, a sexual idyll counterpointing the physical trials of sun, rain, cold or thirst.

It is a plot that might have been more than competently handled by Nevil Shute, especially as the author has sensibly avoided "period quirkiness" in the dialogue, where only the occasional contemporary vulgarity jars. Yet even if one overstates pronouncing on the ultimate effectiveness of the historical and spiritual symbolism or the extent to which Andre Brink has achieved the kind of epic writing he is aiming at, there is much writing here that is memorable by any standards, especially but not exclusively in its evocation of the landscape. It is not merely the travel-poster decor of veld or mountain which is justified by a precisely communicated feeling for its plains, animals and birds (which Larsson's expedition set out to record and classify); there is a genuinely historical sense of the almost paradisaical quality of the fertility and temperance which the Cape must have had in the eighteenth century.

beautiful and heartbreaking... But in the end, just like late Shakespeare: return, reconciliation, rebirth.

The social side of the novel—working-class led metamorphoses from Northern muck to the slimmer world of smart London—is much less interesting than it might be. The Metropolitan Good Life is barely evoked, let alone satirized. Vague clichés of success surround Vic, fast cars, stereo. But to be fair, Mr Barstow's attention is on the heart of the matter. Lost Love returns, is glimpsed, reached for, and ecstatically embraced. But isn't Romantic reconciliation with a lost love who happens to be an actress rather a sentimental and unlikely cop-out for tough old Vic Brown?

Sue Limb

Possessed by death

By Eric Korn

HERBERT LIEBERMAN: City of the Dead 367pp. Hutchinson. £1.95.

The locale is New York; that over-familiar putrescent city of crumbling brownstone, strewn garbage and sprayed graffiti in murderous hallways, where bodies are perforated in life by needle or syringe, and after it by rats, necrophiliacs and coppers.

Among the latter Paul Konig rules: chief medical examiner, a pathologist of preternatural skill and deductive power, wielder of as dainty a scalpel as ever probed a precisely-depleted rotting cadaver, ever ready to fudge the evidence a little in the interests of justice. "A sour greenish chyme leaks onto his chin as Konig lumps past"; that's the thing about Konig, he brings out the worst in everyone. His absolute devotion to right is a morose violence, a morose mourning the passing of the electric chair, and his mawkish toughness ("he sits there for a while and tries to cry but he can't. Nothing will come. He is not the sort of man to cry. At least not one who is as tough as he is") are enough to make the reader lose his lunch even before stumbling onto the more deliberately comic passages.

His wife is dead, his daughter driven away. There remains the Department, which he rules with an enervate self-righteous rage that expresses itself in dialogue of morose ferocity that has become a cliché of films and television serials (and that's just when talking to colleagues). The novel describes, with some relish and a glut of picturesque detail, a peculiarly messy identification job which requires the roasting of two cadavers from a heap of organic garbage, in the course of which Konig, the strong, the sensitive ("what a goddam marvelous miracle of engineering," he mutters, restraining a very strong opinion), is made helpless by the kidnapping of his daughter. Finally Konig, who, coincidentally, acted Lear at medical school, loses his cool, his kingdom and his daughter.

The combination of the macabre and the grotesque is unworking. A sizeable amount of small filth bulges outward from the wound, a strange flower-like excretion, like a red anemone blooming there between her breasts. How ineptly the punch is telegraphed by the word "flower-like," leaving only a soggy mess behind. But Konig's style is full of infelicities of image or tone: blackbirds chug and pigeons wamble, characters are lithesome or darkly handsome, a street is "an intaglio of ethnic mix." Excessive precision alternates with straggling vagueness: gabbets of flesh and innards hacked indiscriminately from various parts of the anatomy; there are images with no objective correlative whatever: "a small feckless puff of air falls from Skardon's lips".

The forensic expertise, though lavishly displayed and intermittently gripping, does not carry absolute conviction. "Ratsbane" may be a simple misprint for "ratsbane," and the remark about the image of the executioner being imprinted on the retina may be a joke, but Mr Lieberman should know that modern toxicology departments do not test for muretic acid (an eighteenth-century name for hydrochloric acid and not a common phenol derivative) and that it would be an unusually little gynaecologist who "during the course of an internal examination, glimpsed a tiny fetus clinging to the wall of the uterus".

A guided tour round an abattoir is undoubtedly educational, and it may be salutary to gaze intently at human anatomy. There's a new genre coming into focus—documentaries of butchery, neo-didacticism, haemorrhagic Westerns and snuff movies—which may illuminate characters celebrating the death with or merely exploit a sadistic lechery, and it's necessary to know which is happening. This novel's intention is obscured by its bungled execution (and there are plenty of those described), but that, alas, won't stop the movie.

J. B. Priestley

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Heinemann

The calculations of Conrad

By J. I. M. Stewart

PETER L. GLASSMAN:
Language and Being
246pp. Columbia University Press.
£7.80.

EDWARD CRANKSHAW:
Joseph Conrad
246pp. Macmillan. £7.95.

ADAM CURLE:
The Last of Conrad
18pp. Joseph Conrad Society.
Oinda, Beacon Hill Road, Hind-
head, Surrey. 75p.

JOHN FOMAN:
Under Polish Eyes, as seen by
Joseph Retinger
23pp. Joseph Conrad Society. 75p.

Studies in Joseph Conrad
Publication annuelle du Centro
d'Etudes et de Recherches
Victorinennes et Edouardines
294pp. Montpellier: Université Paul
Valéry.

Resolved to get on terms with what is clearly an interesting book about Conrad, I find it not lions at least lion cubs in the path. There is Peter Glassman's title for a start—*Language and Being*; I have to resist an impulse to judge it pretentious and vague. Then there is his publisher's (now so frequent) announcement that the work is "controversial" and replete with "radically new interpretations". These are here achieved, it seems, by placing Conrad's "character and literature within the contemporary critical perspectives extended by phenomenological and post-Freudian personalism, methodology". Shades of Mr Flosky!

Title and blurb were alike, conceivably, wished on Mr Glassman,

but at least he is responsible for his own prose style. I think I understand what a "political corner" is, although it seems not an important aspect of Kurtz; and I have to pause only a moment when the Accountant is said to view that civilising genius as "a protégé to power". But I am astonished to find Mr Glassman far overgoing Conrad's own uncertainties about English idiom and grammar. "Shall" and "will" would and "should" proliferate in a chaos with which current American usage has little to do, and quite strange is the fate of "also". We have all been taught that it is inelegant to begin sentences or paragraphs with this word followed by a comma. Mr Glassman, engaged (one imagines) in writing a doctoral thesis, must thus have been deprived of a ready, syntactical means of adding instances to instance in the manner approved in such efforts, and got over the difficulty simply by scrapping "also" and substituting "too". Too, although I frequently consult his letters, I never suppose, perhaps because my reading is defective, I have not come across this before. It is here employed persistently.

Such stylistic infelicities, unimportant in themselves, sometimes vitiate the argument. The narrator in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* is, we are told, to assert "the lifelessness of the shore"—which is true enough. But Mr Glassman adds: "By way of expressing his contempt for their vacuousness, the narrator goes so far as to describe landscapes with the neuter personal pronoun." And he quotes:

"A toff in a black coat and high hat scrambled with agility. It was [the second mate's] brother... A lady appeared suddenly... Later he adds '... I saw a red-faced, blowy woman... It was [the ship's] mother.' But the narrator does not 'go so far as' to make any point in this way. Conrad is simply ahead of Mr

Glassman in knowledge of how the English talk.

The book's thesis is basically simple, and its novelty is in part, although not entirely, a matter of terminology. Conrad had an unhappy childhood, but soon discovered from his reading "that one may preserve one's personality—or perhaps even establish it—by entering into extreme communion with a created linguistic world". And as his deeply traumatized character could not have felt to him a discrete and secured entity upon which, as it were, he could rely, he wrote fiction largely because he required a way to become honourably multiple: in his "identity" and "to propose a self or a set of selves to men and women toward whom he looked for sustenance and sanction."

It is Mr Glassman's cardinal and just perception that Conrad affords a striking instance of something common enough: the artist's propensity to view his work as a defining and clarifying and fortifying of his own identity. "It is myself that I remake," Yeats retorted upon those who censured his roving of his earlier poetry. Conrad is certainly not alone in that he, in Mr Glassman's words, "habitually treated other men's—and women's—response to his fiction as either a certification or rejection of his personality". It is the great virtue of this book that it makes us vividly aware, largely through quotation from Conrad's letters, of the force of the agon (for it was that) in one who is so frequently among the greatest novelists of his time. But something of Conrad's own extravagance of admission here seems to me to rub off on his analyst, so that we are aware of Mr Glassman as frequently overstating his case. Can we really be assured of the boy Conrad that "for eleven years he had been educated to regard himself as not a person at all"? And is there not in the mature Conrad a stoicism, a heroic irony, even a nobility, which must

be set over against the writhing neuropath here presented?

Mr Glassman, indeed, is splendidly convinced of the pluck of Conrad's achievement, but he underestimates its breadth and fullness. The novel's struggle "to confer upon the writing of fiction the entire structure and sanction of his severely depleted personality" affords a field for genetic inquiry which Mr Glassman explores with intelligence and pertinacity. But to assert, as does the final sentence in the book, that in default of these painstaking and painful investigations the novels are "inconprehensible" is fortunately quite untrue.

With Edward Crankshaw's *Joseph Conrad*, first published in 1936 and now revised with a new preface by the author, we are back in a decidedly pre-post-Freudian world. Mr Crankshaw is already aware, indeed, of a drift in criticism towards what may be called Mr Glassman's stance, and on an early page he distinguishes between one sort of interest in a novelist and another, and declares where his own lies.

To understand the books of a novelist in a strictly psychological sense is one thing; it belongs to the study of mankind. To understand them in an aesthetic sense, from the reader's point of view in other words, is quite another: it belongs to the study of art. To maintain that biographical knowledge of an artist is essential to a proper understanding of his work is, aesthetically, to assert the invalidity of every work of art of obscure or uncertain origin. This seems to me a tall assertion.

Mr Crankshaw stops short only of concurring in the belief that we must best off if we know nothing about an artist as man at all. About Conrad three facts are usually to be borne in mind. He was a Pole, was a sailor, was a naturalized Englishman loving this country. Once clear about this, we can

proceed to our proper business, which is to study his work, his aims, and his technique as novelist. And technique is not the crux. We have to confront a paradox that here was a sensitive artist who, unlike his contemporaries Henry James, "seems to have worked in a state of semi-blindness, calculating as the need arose, and using his bridges as they came, like a seaman, from hand to mouth. We deal with this paradox best by concluding that some artists calculate consciously, some unconsciously, and some not at all. Conrad belongs in the middle. To study his work closely is to discover artistry and calculation everywhere. Just upon the way and at the end of the way.

The manner in which Mr Crankshaw thus lays down the general lines of his approach may appear slightly dated: a bit simplistic, a shade diffuse, and minimally robust.

But the book as a whole is something more than a pioneer attempt to rescue Conrad from the sea and the jungle, and to bring him within the sphere of the sort of criticism best represented by Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*, a seminal work belonging to 1921. Despite its deceptively easy movement, it is work of sustained and rigorous analysis which must have a permanent place in Conrad criticism.

The Joseph Conrad Society produced two useful reprints of a matter of some biographical interest from sources not readily available. The first is *The Last of Conrad*, last days, prefaced by a memoir of Curle by his son, Adam Curle; the second is a series of extracts from J. H. Reiniger's *Conrad and his Contemporaries*, similarly prefaced by John Foman. *Studies in Joseph Conrad* is a collection of essays mainly by French universities. It is not, like the splendid *Homage to Joseph Conrad* which constituted an issue of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* December 1924, embellished with curious photographs ("Lord's féfé par le peuple du Patagonie" but it contains a number of interesting critical papers. Zdzislaw Najder contributes an fragments from biography of Conrad now in press.

Diary of a melancholy Dane

By Elias Bredsdorff

H. C. ANDERSEN:

Edited by Helga Vang Lauridsen,
Tue Gad and Kirsten Weber
Volume 2: 1836-1844. 448pp.
Volume 3: 1845-1850. 428pp.
Volume 4: 1851-1860. 476pp.
Volume 5: 1861-1865. 353pp.
Volume 6: 1866-1870. 388pp.
Volume 7: 1871-1875. 464pp.
Volume 8: 1876-1877. 397pp.
Volume 9: 1878-1879. 482pp.
Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad.

Publication of Hans Christian Andersen's diaries began in 1971 when Volume 1 (covering the period 1825-1834) and Volume 5 (covering the period 1861-1863) were published under the auspices of Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, with H. Topsøe-Jensen and Klara Olsen acting as general editors; those two volumes were reviewed in the TLS on February 4, 1972. Since then another eight volumes have been published, which means that the full text of Andersen's diaries is now available for the first time, a hundred years after his death. The Index will be published in two volumes in 1976-77.

Andersen was one of the great travellers of his time; he visited most European countries and even went beyond Europe—to North Africa and Asia Minor. The diaries he kept on his journeys abroad are very detailed, for he was dependent on this material when writing his travel accounts. Though less polished than the finished product they often have the charm of the immediate impression. As an example I quote his description of his first railway journey, from Magdeburg to Leipzig on November 10, 1840:

Now I have a conception of the movement of the earth, close by me grass and fields were moving like a rotating spinning wheel, only the more remote objects seemed to keep their usual tranquillity. Now I can imagine the flight of the birds of passage, thus they must leave towns and cities behind them. It was as if one town was situated quite close to another. It has an aura of magic about it; I felt like a magician who had harnessed a dragon in front of my carriage and was now darting past the poor mortals whom I saw creeping along on the side roads in their vehicles, as if they were snails. When steam is let out it sounds like deep, groaning. The signal pipe is abominable, it's like hearing a pig screaming when the knife is stuck into it. I was alone with another man in a compartment intended for eight persons; I thought: suppose he was mad and had his fit, it made me feel quite hot.

The many famous men and women he met also appear. Here are his impressions of Franz Liszt from Volume 2:

I saw Liszt face to face. Great men are like mountains, they are best seen to their advantage from a distance, when there is still a ring of air around them. He looked as if he had been treated at the orthopaedic hospital where he had been straitened out; there was something epididymal, something demonic about him, and as he was sitting there in front of the piano, pale and with a face full of strong passions, he seemed to me like a devil who was trying to liberate his soul by playing.

And from Volume 4:

Liszt came to visit me. He and



Portrait of Andersen by Hans Tegner, who illustrated forty-three of his stories for the "World Edition" published in eight countries in 1900. From Danske H. C. Andersen—Illustrationer by Erik Duf (Copenhagen: Forum, 1975).

the Princess seem to me to be like a fire, they blaze, they flare up, they warm you up momentarily, but you cannot get near them without being scorched.

Whenever Andersen visited Germany a lot of kissing and weeping went on:

Kohl lovingly kissed me when taking leave. They all love me. Yesterday Frau Serre gave me a wallet, and also kissed me; last night her husband kissed me. . . . (Volume 2.)

[The hereditary archduke of Weimar] pressed me to his

bosom, we kissed one another. "Think of this hour," he said, "as being yesterday. We shall remain friends for the rest of our lives."—We both wept. (Volume 3.)

Sometimes, though not as often as one might expect, Andersen's diaries throw light on his writing. We can see, for instance, how the idea of "The Ugly Duckling" first came to him while staying at a Danish manor. He first referred to it as "The Story of a Duck"; three weeks later he wrote, "Began 'The Cuckoo' yesterday."

The idea for another tale, "The

Comet", came during the performance of *The Magic Flute* in Copenhagen's Royal Theatre: "I told it to Thiele there and then and went home and wrote half of it." The next day he finished the tale. Another idea came to him two days later when he was again listening to *The Magic Flute*: "I was in the right mood, went home and wrote the fairy tale 'Sunshine Stories'. It was late, and I was tired writing, but went on till it was all on paper after midnight." The next day he read the story aloud eight times to different people. At other times he felt dried up and wrote of his "longing to have an inspiration to write something".

Occasionally an entry simply records, "I had an idea for a new tale", and sometimes he gives details of tales he thought of writing but never did write: "I had ideas and began two new tales, one about the telegraph wire, 'From Europe to Africa', the other one 'A Story's Letter from Suez'; in the month when the Suez Canal was opened."

Once in a while one finds in Andersen's diaries factual observations which he used years later in a fictional context. Thus in May 1847 he gives an amusing account of how, while staying at a Danish manor house, he was visited by a woman who wanted his host (he was absent) to buy shares in her tannery. In the story "Hjerterisorg" (Heartbreak), which he wrote six years later, the account of the woman's visit is used almost verbatim.

On June 1, 1847, Andersen noted in his diary: "They say about Schopenhauer that he is so stingy that he gets up during the night and barks to make people think he has a dog, but he won't have one. Every morning he lets in his neighbour's cockerel to his own hens, but when it's feeding time he first closes out the cockerel." This bit of gossip is obviously the inspiration behind the following paragraph in his story entitled "A Good Temper":

Here lies a dame who was terribly stingy. When she was alive, she used to get up at night and mew,

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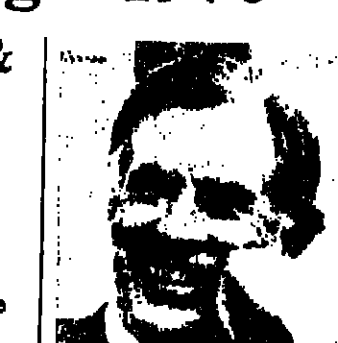
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so that her neighbours should think she kept a cat. Yes, she was as stingy as that.

And the descriptions in the diaries of the burning heat of Naples in July 1846, and the monotonous finger-exercises coming from the house opposite... he found almost word for word in 'The Shadow'. It occasionally happened that Andersen realized that something he had written might contain more than he had deliberately put into it. On December 30, 1860, he remarks: 'I wrote a fairly tale, 'The Beetle' read it, and in a strange way it seemed to be meaningful in many respects I hadn't thought of while writing it.'

We meet also in the diaries Andersen's unrequited lover, who put down his melancholy feelings on paper. When the sixteen-year-old Sophie Ørsted told him (he was then thirty-two) that she had just become engaged, he confided to his diary:

Now I shall never be married, no young woman grows up for me any more, day by day I shall become more of a bachelor. Oh! Even yesterday I was young among the young—this evening I'm old. God bless you, my dear, my beloved Sophie! You will never know how happily I could have lived with you if I had had the money.

In Berlin he wrote on Christmas Eve, 1845:

Have heard nothing from Jenny [Lind], I feel hurt and sad. She is not like a sister to me in Berlin. If she had wanted me to be a stranger here, she might have told me so, and I would have been so. She did once fill my heart—I do not know her any more! In Berlin she has carved out my sick flesh with a cold knife.

Shortly before his seventieth birthday Andersen was told that one of his young friends had become engaged, and in his diary the old bachelor commented: 'This is something I shall never experience, but then I have been granted so many other and happy things.' The diaries afford plenty of evidence, however, of the hard battle Andersen fought for years against giving in to his lusty urges. The temptations were greatest when he was abroad; thus in Paris in 1843: 'My thoughts are those of the blood, the thoughts they all know. Why haven't they been deadened in me when I was quite young as become sedate?' and in Naples on May 9, 1846: 'I'm burning like Vesuvius—what a battle.' At home in Denmark, on July 20, 1850, he similarly recorded: 'Am unable to sleep, sexual longings are still strong, within me. Fortunately he who is well married.'

Andersen was clearly scared of sex, and there is every reason to believe that he remained a virgin throughout his life. But on a few occasions as an elderly man he plucked up courage to become a voyeur and look at naked girls in brothels in Paris. He was fifty-two when he wrote the following entry:

Having dined I walked up and down in a state of burning desire, then suddenly went into a human shop. One woman was pasted with powder, the next one was very simple, the third one a complete lady; I spoke to her, paid her 12 francs and left without having sinned in deeds, though certainly in my mind. She asked me to come again, told me that she thought I was very innocent for a gentleman. I was relieved and happy when I left that house. Many will call me a coward—I wonder if I was so in this case.

Andersen often wrote down his dreams, many of which would undoubtedly lend themselves to Freudian interpretations: 'I walked in the street in a torrent of water, and when the water sank I saw a closed carriage sailing and disappearing in the canal. I myself was walking without any clothes on, only wearing my Scottish plaid, and the street urchins run after me. I wanted to go in a boat to Nyhavn, and there old Colfin came and oppressed me; I was in a state of terrible despair, and asked him if he wasn't dead, but he wasn't.'

Between 1865 and 1874 Andersen often refers to what he calls 'my pen and ink dream', which was an enormous dream of a baby lying at my breast, and I baby the last day.

turned into a wet rag." Several of his dreams are about persecution of one kind or another, as the following:

Slept badly, had unpleasant dreams. I was in prison, caught by the riot police though I had done nothing. I was sent to jail. Where do these phantasies come from? I have lived inside another person and been sent to prison innocently? I always have the feeling of being innocent.

Doubts about his own future as a writer are constantly recurring phenomena: 'In a melancholy state; my future as a *Digter* is over. Equally frequent at all times is his fear of becoming mad, like his father and his grandfather. His depressions are reflected in entries such as 'I'm irritable and melancholy, angry with a great many people, only unhappiness, distress, violence, oblivion and death await me.'

Though during the last few years of his life Andersen was a sick man, an irritable old bachelor, querulous and impatient, and prone to tears of anger and frustration, as the last volume of his diaries clearly shows, he could also be humble:

Last night the Countess [Hastel] was very kind and soft spoken. 'Please pray for my children', she said, and I felt humble at the thought that I felt all people should be able to offer a prayer to the Lord on behalf of his children. I who am so infinitely sinful!

And he could still be grateful, as when he wrote after his seventy-fifth birthday: 'What a beautiful, marvelous day, and yet, how pitiable my body is to carry all that blessing from God.'

It is easy to understand why a self-centred person such as Andersen should have kept a regular diary, but containing as they do very many private confessions one wonders whether he ever thought of destroying his diaries.

After a christening in November 1865, when Andersen was one of his godfathers, he wrote in his diary: 'In case this is ever going to be printed, and I'm terrified at the thought of all the things that are being printed—then I shall bear witness that this was indeed an excellent dinner...'. (6, 329). In May 1876 he was again concerned with the fate of his diaries after his death:

If this diary is going to be read sometime in the future, people will find it empty and insignificant. I do not put on paper the things that really moved me, for a variety of reasons which concern myself and many others. 'There is something rotten in Denmark', says Shakespeare, and we agree, 'something rotten in the world'.

Very often, however, Andersen forgot to be cautious and confided to his diaries what he did not dare say openly. For this he could write such entries as the following:

I will not conceal on these leaves, which will never be printed and were born in my thoughts of the day that I have felt much in my life as being related to Thorvaldsen's, we were both born in poverty and had our struggles and our recognition in the world. Andersen as well known in the world as he is; our countrymen cannot see it now, but it's certainly true, yes, the same will probably continue to be true. Yes, I believe that now my name is better known than his all over the world, but mine will be extinguished, and his will live. Is this vanity?

Only once on New Year's Eve, 1877, did Andersen mention the possibility of 'destroying' his diaries: he wrote that he 'regretted the new year... by drinking and sleeping', and then added the words that 'this will not be misinterpreted if read sometime in the future, in my intention to burn all these entries.'

But I doubt if he ever really considered burning these precious private documents which were so important to him that even when his final illness prevented him from writing any more, he kept on dictating entries for his diary, until finally his mind gave way. During the last week of his life Mrs. Melchior (in whose house he died) continued his diary, which reached August 4, 1878, with the words: 'What a fight has been fought, and what a victory! At 11.05 our dear friend breathed his last.'

HISTORY

The vagabond prince

By Stephen Koss

CHRISTOPHER HIBBERT:

Edward VII

339pp. Allen Lane. £5.95.

Although they share our century and many of our modern preoccupations, the personalities of the Edwardian age are separated from us by the impassable gap of the First World War. Even the privileged few among them who enjoyed the early convenience of telephones and motor cars were in more crucial respects, curiously remote. This psychological distance, coupled with the sugar-coated fatalism with which their remarkable literary efforts were suffused, has evoked renewed fascination. The famous television series, however, doubtless played a part, bathing the period in a romantic glow that has rendered even the chockingly thick fogs in pastel shades. The Edwardians may have predated Technicolor, but they readily lend themselves to it.

It is not to disparage Christopher Hibbert's latest book to fit it into this context. He has provided a 'portrait', aptly labelled, of the monarch who bestowed his name on a brief but tantalizing era. Like the period itself, it is rich in anecdotal material, sometimes amusing, but highly spirited. Despite the new sources which the author has tapped, it does not diverge significantly from the lines which Sir Philip Magnus laid down a dozen years ago. No matter. With a jaunty acuity and acute sensitivity to character, Mr Hibbert has helped to satisfy the seemingly insatiable appetite for Edwardiana.

Political and social developments (as opposed to social activities) are relegated to the background, against which the personal drama is deftly presented. But drama is too dignified a description for Edward's life, which was more akin to operetta. As Mr Hibbert depicts him, he resembles a character out of Franz Lehár, in whose stage-world he would have been quite at home. Like still the younger Johann Strauss, Edward was a keen opera-goer. As Mr Hibbert depicts him, he resembles a character out of Franz Lehár, in whose stage-world he would have been quite at home. Like still the younger Johann Strauss, Edward was a keen opera-goer. As Mr Hibbert depicts him, he resembles a character out of Franz Lehár, in whose stage-world he would have been quite at home. Like still the younger Johann Strauss, Edward was a keen opera-goer.

Prince of Wales for six decades before he became King-Emperor for nine years, Edward possessed limited powers of application and an unlimited capacity for self-indulgence. He inherited most of the more egregious traits of his Hanoverian forbears, to the consternation of his mother, who strove to suppress them in herself. Prince Albert, who employed the services of a leading phrenologist to diagnose 'the peculiarities' of his son's 'temperament and brain', preferred to ascribe these wayward tendencies to recessive Stuart genes. But Mr Hibbert, the accomplished biographer of George IV, knows better.

Slow to emerge from the 'frog stage' of childhood, as the queen disdainfully called it, 'Bertie' remained an overgrown boy to the end of his days. His mother dreaded the 'terrible moment', when three years distant, 'when he will be of age and we can't hold him except by moral power', which had proved singularly ineffective. His father, the real Victorian in the family, belittled him as 'a thorough and cunning lazybones'. To be sure, as Victoria herself admitted, their son 'was never spared any reproach'. Yet his conduct gave as little satisfaction as his judgment inspired confidence.

During a visit to North America in the summer of 1860, the Prince of Wales, ready to take any diversion, accepted an invitation from a light-rope-walker to be pushed across Niagara Falls in a wheelbarrow. Members of his entourage had to restrain him. Even Prince Orlovsky would have shown more sense.

With a young actress, Nellie Clifden, Prince Albert was horrified to hear of the 'evil deed', which threatened to jeopardize plans for Edward to marry Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

Already ill with typhoid fever, he died soon afterwards, leaving Victoria to blame his untimely demise on 'Bertie's fall'. Characteristically, Princess Alexandra was more forgiving. She would have married the Prince of Wales if he were a cowboy, she declared on her wedding day. By then, to all intents and purposes, the royal union was already solemnized. Queen Victoria had escorted the couple to Albert's mausoleum at Frogmore, assuring them 'He gives you his blessing'.

With a trained eye for amusing detail, Mr Hibbert introduces the reader to the frivolous, raffish, and often frankly disreputable companions with whom Edward indulged his 'fresh' tastes. 'If you ever become King', Victoria sternly warned him in 1868, 'you will find all these friends most inconvenient, and you will have to break with them all.' But Edward did allow his accessions to the throne in 1901 either to change his habits or affect his loyalties. Although Henry James, for one, shuddered to think that 'Edward the Caracasser', whom he regarded as the arch vulgarizer, was now king, others were quickly moved to revise their unflattering opinions.

What did it require to succeed as an early twentieth-century monarch? Lord Escher, whom Margot Asquith would have classified among 'the court pests', faulted Edward for being 'too human'; but that was precisely the quality that endeared Edward VII to a vast number of his subjects. With a smouldering cigar wedged between his pudgy fingers, a decanter of champagne within easy reach, and a chorus girl on his knee, he came across as a roly-poly figure of merriment. Known as 'Kinky' to Mrs Keppel's daughters, for whose amusement he raced pieces of buttered toast (battered sides down) along the stripes of his trousers, he won affection by being a living caricature of the materialist society over which he presided.

Mr Hibbert is inclined to assign him credit for being something more, but not too much more. By his reckoning, the king's intrusion into diplomacy may have helped to pave the road on which the Foreign

Office was already embarked. The French understandably overestimated his influence behind the Entente Cordiale, and various historians have since echoed their assumption. In truth, the king's approach towards foreign affairs was idiosyncratic and sentimental.

His grasp of domestic questions was even more tenuous, and his relations with successive governments were uniformly awkward. He may have taken offence when the Kaiser referred to British ministers of state as 'unmitigated noodles', but his own private views did not substantially differ.

The constitutional battle over the House of Lords was the final and most agonizing crisis of his kingship.

Mr Hibbert, primarily concerned with the royal position and perspective, does not undertake to plumb the depths of the controversy, making it rather difficult to appreciate the intense passions it aroused. Nevertheless, Edward VII is seen to have behaved with dignity and common sense. He was scrupulous in his attempt to hold the Crown aloof from partisan acrimony and to project an image of impartiality. To Lord Knollys, his private secretary, he confided his belief that the 'Peers were mad' to reject the Lloyd George budget and thereby to provoke a fight which they could not hope to win. He died when the struggle was at its height, and his Tories rancorously asserted that it had killed him. Queen Alexandra, however, blamed 'that horrid Biarritz', where her husband had recently spent his last holiday.

It is interesting to discover that, philistine that he was, Edward readily despised the 'trash' which Alfred Austin, the Poet Laureate, felt obliged to churn out. It is even more interesting to learn that the often-quoted couplet, written as Edward lay desperately ill in 1871, has been 'perhaps mistakenly' attributed to the same pen. Mr Hibbert does not reveal the basis on which he has tentatively disputed Austin's culpability for these immortal lines. Here, as elsewhere, the reference notes that conclude the volume prove arbitrary and uninformative. Yet, in the last analysis, this book is intended not so much to instruct as to entertain and, on that score, it stands justified. It may disappoint those who seek most of the issues; but, then, so did this royal vagabond.

For the Republic

By J. C. Beckett

J. ANTHONY GAUGHAN:

Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee, R.I.C.

397pp. Dublin: Anvil Books. £5.50.

Jeremiah Mee, the son of a small farmer in Co. Galway, joined the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1910, at the age of twenty-one. Ten years later, when the conflict between the government and the IRA was at its height, he resigned; and, very shortly afterwards, he took service with the Republicans. It is this period of his career, down to the beginning of 1922, that is covered by the memoirs he compiled some thirty years later, not long before his death in 1955. These memoirs have now been edited for publication by J. Anthony Gaughan.

'Edited' is, perhaps, hardly the right word. 'I have', says Fr. Gaughan in his introduction, 'extensively' re-written Mee's memoirs, but I have not significantly altered their content. This is a vague and general statement that it is impossible for the reader to know how much of the original has survived.

It is, after all, as a record of reactions rather than of events that a personal memoir of this critical period could be of most value to the historian. The weakness of the memoirs of the Royal Irish Constabulary from 1919 onwards, in face of IRA attacks and propaganda, was a heavy blow to the government's authority; and it would be interesting if we could trace the stages by which Mee, in many respects a typical member of the force, came to transfer his allegiance to the Republican cause. But the language in which a man expresses himself is often more revealing

than the more factual record; and a memoir that has been 'extensively' re-written can hardly be regarded as satisfactory evidence.

The general reader, however, will hardly be troubled by this consideration, and he will find a good deal to interest him. The early sections give a convincing picture of the life of a rural constable in time of peace. Then, as the political situation in Ireland deteriorated from 1919 onwards, we see how this life was disrupted by the growing conflict. For Mee the turning-point came in June, 1920, in the police 'mutiny' at Listowel, where he played a leading part; and his resignation from the police followed as a matter of course. His action at Listowel seems to have been a response to immediate circumstances rather than a reflection of any change in his political views; but, not long afterwards, we find him wearing allegiance to the Irish Republic—on a volume of Yeats's poems.

From this point onwards the memoirs are concerned solely with his work for the Republican cause, and especially with his share in organizing a boycott of Belfast goods. This is certainly the liveliest part of the book, for here Mee's (or Fr. Gaughan's) plain and sometimes rather drab style is relieved by a good many graphic anecdotes.

Finally, though one may criticize Fr. Gaughan for interposing himself between Mee and the reader, one must add that in other respects he has performed his editorial duties conscientiously. The footnotes contain a mass of out-of-the-way information about men and events; the numerous appendices, occupying about one-third of the book, provide a good deal of relevant, documentary material; and the illustrations, which must have taken much research to assemble, add both interest and value.

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The Sigla of Finnegans Wake

Socialism or barbarism

By E. H. Carr

NORMAN GERAS:

The Legacy of Rosa Luxemburg
210pp. New Left Books. £4.50

Peter Neill's masterly biography of Rosa Luxemburg, now ten years old, focused the searchlight of scholarly research on every phase of her rich and adventurous public career. This remarkable woman, with the advantages of an acute intellect and compelling oratorical power, played a commanding and controversial part in the rise of both Polish and German socialism. A born fighter, her reaction to the Russian Revolution was both enthusiastic and critical. She was one of the founders of the German Communist Party in January, 1919, in the midst of the abortive German revolution. There was something symbolical about her murder a few days later by right-wing thugs who prefigured Hitler's stormtroopers.

Like Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg stood out both as a theorist and as a political leader and agitator. It is not surprising that, more than fifty years after her death, students of recent history should still be concerned with her ideas, or that her works should still be quoted in contemporary controversies. She was a prolific writer and speaker in a period of rapid and tempestuous change. What she said and wrote has to be looked at in its context; and some of the ambiguities and contradictions are more apparent than real. Norman Geras is the latest of many political thinkers who have tried to interpret and define her place in revolutionary history. *The Legacy of Rosa Luxemburg* is a short and closely packed book consisting of four separate essays, of which two have been previously published.

The first and most successful of these is an attempt to rescue Rosa from the charge, so often levelled against her, of "fatalism" or "determinism"—a charge which earned her in the Stalinist period the wholly undeserved label of Menshevism. In the most important of her theoretical works, *The Accumulation of Capital* published in 1913, she developed an argument, which she considered to be missing in Marx, for the inevitability of the collapse of the capitalist system, due to the progressive amputation or exhaustion of exploitable non-capitalist markets in the colonial

world. On the strength of this, she alleged to have supposed or implied that the victory of socialism was inevitable, irrespective of any action that might be taken by the working class.

Norman Geras convincingly shows that, notwithstanding some ambiguities of phrasing, this was not what Rosa said or believed. In the famous *Junius Letter* of 1915 she offered the alternative: "socialism or barbarism". The collapse of capitalism could point in one direction as well as in the other. Even her speech at the founding congress of the German Communist Party, when she did speak of socialism as a "historical necessity", the qualification was still there:

"Socialism is inevitable, not merely because proletarians are no longer willing to live under the conditions imposed by the capitalist class, but because, if the proletariat fails to fulfil its duties as a class, if it fails to realize socialism, we shall crash down together to a common doom."

That the collapse of the capitalist order could lead, not to socialism, but to a "common doom" of "barbarism", is a sobering reflection in the world of today. The handling of Rosa Luxemburg's alleged commitment to "spontaneity" is also excellent. The catchwords "spontaneity" and "consciousness" reflected an early controversy in the Russian party. The so-called "economists" maintained that economic mass action in the form of trade union activities, strikes, etc., would make the workers "spontaneously" ripe for revolutionary action. Lenin on the other hand held that political schooling and leadership were an essential condition: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." For Lenin this was what class consciousness meant. When Rosa praised the mass strike as the distinctive mode of action of the proletariat, she seemed to be following in the tradition of the "economists".

The controversy had little substance, but was fuelled at a time when Soviet propaganda was concerned to sharpen the antagonism between Rosa and Lenin. It is true that Rosa, who based her thinking on the more highly developed German proletariat, criticized Lenin's insistence on the need to instil class consciousness in the workers through organized leadership. But Lenin was the last to deny the masses in revolutionary action. Nor did Rosa reject organization and leadership. Her

demand for the mass strike and other forms of mass action was meant as a call to the workers not to be misled by illusions of the attainment of socialism through the processes of parliamentary democracy, which appeared to be seeping into the German Social Democratic Party, but to recognize that the goal could be achieved only by direct proletarian revolutionary action. The point about the mass strike was that it was frankly political.

The longest essay in the volume is an attempt to sort out Rosa Luxemburg's views before 1914 in relation to those of the Russian leaders—especially, of course, of Lenin and Trotsky. Here the arguments become rather fine-spun. There are issues of current policy more often than of abstract theory, and differences more often differences of emphasis than of principle. As Mr Geras remarks, and for obvious reasons, "the peasantry was not central to Luxemburg's attention as it was to Lenin's". But she—and Trotsky—fully accepted the necessity of the alliance between proletariat and peasantry; and Lenin, like them, also accepted the leadership of the proletariat. Should Trotsky and Rosa be accused, as both of them afterwards were, of neglecting the peasantry? No amount of theoretical discussion helps here.

More baffling is the vast complex of questions revolving round the issue of the stages of revolution—the Marxist progression from feudalism through bourgeois democracy to socialism. Should the rights and facilities offered by bourgeois democracy be gratefully utilized by the workers in their struggle for socialism? Or should bourgeois democracy be condemned and rejected root and branch? You could not answer "yes" or "no" to these questions. If you said "both", you involved yourself in inconsistencies and contradictions to which only the dialectic provided an answer.

When you approached Russia, the thicket was denser still. In Russia, revolutionary action by the proletariat was required to complete the unfinished bourgeois revolution: here Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg were all in agreement, though with nuances which separated Lenin from Trotsky, and perhaps from Luxemburg—the famous theme of "permanent revolution". Could the Russian proletariat, in completing the bourgeois revolution, initiate the transition to socialism? Here Lenin (at any rate after April, 1917) and Trotsky said "yes"; Luxemburg was perhaps

sceptical. Could the Russian proletariat in isolation, without effective support from the proletariat of more advanced countries, complete the transition to socialism? Nobody even asked the question. At a moment when the eyes of every revolutionary were trained on the growing prospects of revolution in central Europe, and every-one assumed that the survival of the Russian Revolution depended on the realization of these prospects, the question would have been pointless and irrelevant. At no time while Rosa was alive did it make sense. The bogey of socialism in one country, anathema to every Marxist, had not yet reared its head.

Finally Mr Geras deals faithfully with Rosa's essay *The Russian Revolution*, written in prison in the summer of 1918, never prepared for publication, and first published more than three years after her death by the dissident German communist, Paul Levi. Ten years earlier she had attacked the elements of centralized authority which she detected in Lenin's conception of party, and which seemed to smack rather of bureaucracy than of democracy. There were utopian streaks in Rosa's thinking; Mr Geras compares her in this respect with the Lenin of *State and Revolution*. These fears of the abuse of authority now revived in Rosa's mind, and were reinforced by the compromises tolerated by the new Bolshevik regime—in the agrarian question, in the national question, and above all with the forces of German imperialism at Brest-Litovsk. Her criticisms were sometimes just and sometimes extremely overdone, but it is fair to remember that they were written in prison, with limited knowledge, and far removed from the situation of beleaguered rulers, who had to cope with internal anarchy, with the imminent threat of civil war, and with the hostility of all the great powers.

These passages are frequently quoted today in proof of Rosa Luxemburg's disapproval of the Russian Revolution. But this one-sidedness needs to be corrected by other passages of unflinching eulogy. "All the revolutionary honour and capacity which western socialism by the Bolsheviks was represented by the Bolsheviks"; it was "the salvation of the honour of international socialism". Nor was her protest made in the name of liberal democracy. Mr Geras quotes a passage which endorses to the full the justification which the Bolsheviks themselves claimed for their actions:

At the entire middle class, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, boycotted by the Soviet Government for its complicity in the railroad, post and telegraph, and the educational and administrative apparatus, and this fashion opposed the workers' government, naturally enough measures of pressure were exerted against it. These included the deprivation of political rights, in order to break their resistance with an iron fist. It was precisely in this way that the socialist dictatorship expressed itself, for it cannot shrink from any use of force to secure or to vent certain measures favouring the interests of the whole.

Politics is the most important science, and those who seek to write honestly about it quickly find themselves enmeshed in a web of contradictions. This is a useful and thoughtful book, and the power and originality of Rosa Luxemburg's thinking emerge, however, he made. Mr Geras unnecessarily eager to show he has read everything that has been written on his subject, makes too many of his points against the form—mainly the form of the left—with whom he agrees. Such constant polemics, unfortunately endemic in the literature of the left, tend to become tedious. This book has been an even shorter and perhaps a better, book if Mr Geras had been content to present his interpretations, and had less been preoccupied with the errors of others.

Stalin, as Mr Geras remarks, "approaches every question as if that question were only today and stood apart in all other questions". This is not easily avoided when the argument proceeds by way of condemnation of isolated texts. Lenin, Trotsky, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, people of different geographical, family and educational backgrounds, of different temperaments and different experiences, growing up and working in widely different circumstances. All nurtured in Marx and deeply familiar with the cultural texts, they thought and acted in entirely different idioms. Their imaginative and sympathetic penetration of their individual styles and personalities is required to illuminate the more confrontation of ideas and this Mr Geras does not succeed in supplying.

ART

The museum as work of art

By John Golding

ANGELICA ZANDER RUJENSTINE:
The Guggenheim Museum Collection
Paintings 1880-1945
2 volumes

746pp including 32 colour plates and 320 black-and-white illustrations. Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation (Idea Books). \$85 the set.

In his preface to this catalogue of the Guggenheim collection, Thomas M. Messer, the museum's present director, refers to the fact that it has been called "the greatest among modern collections". A half-truth, as he goes on to remark. I seem to remember that in the 1950s, when the museum was in its old headquarters up the avenue, before it moved to the building especially designed for it by Frank Lloyd Wright, sizable portions of the permanent collection were almost always on view. On consulting the list of exhibitions at the back of the present catalogue, however, I see that even in those days a fairly ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions was already in operation, and that many of the pictures were often out on loan, so I suppose I must have been lucky in the timing of my visits.

Certainly the display mounted by the museum last April to celebrate the publication of the catalogue, which brought out a large percentage of the works listed in it, including many of the collection's major masterpieces, seems to have come as a revelation to many people, and in particular to the younger artists and students to whom I spoke. The exhibition looked splendid, despite some quirks of hanging. With the passing of time the paintings and the exhilarating but decidedly wilful architecture, with its happy display areas, seem to have come to terms with each other. Some of the paintings—predictably it is the earliest works that suffer most—still look unhappy without their frames (part of the museum's display policy). But I for one no longer experience the sense of unease that I used to feel at having to look at paintings whose lower edges cannot, by definition, rest parallel to the floor. And the building does perform the unusual function of transforming the spectators, seen across the vast central drum of space, and sil-

houetted against the pictures as they stroll up and down the winding ramps, into living works of art.

Having acknowledged the museum's glamour and its importance, it must be admitted that it is an odd, unbalanced collection. There is not a single painting by Matisse. His exclusion by the original compilers of the collection, his founder Solomon R. Guggenheim, and his friend and adviser, the redoubtable Baroness Hilla von Rebay (the museum's first director) could be accounted for by the fact that his work was not sufficiently "non-objective": the collection opened its doors to the public in 1939 as *The Museum of Non-Objective Painting*. And yet in 1938 they purchased a superb Bonnard, and the collection was already rich in Chagalls and Modiglianis, all three artists of less importance in the history of abstraction than Matisse. Matisse's influence on abstract artists dates, it is true, mainly from the 1940s. But the collection continues to grow and subsequent directors have broadened its scope. It is now rich in Brancusis, and recently an important group of Dubuffets was acquired. Still no Matisse. There are four works by Juan Gris, but he was an uneven artist, and no one of them testifies to his true stature, or goes very far towards explaining why between 1913 and 1918 he was one of the most influential artists working in Europe. Gris was a decisive force in shaping the art of (among many) Chagall and Matisse, some of whose most significant work is in the collection. On this showing they look as strong as Gris, which they were not. Working outwards from its vast holdings of Kandinsky (put on view at once they could constitute a magnificent Kandinsky museum in their own right), the museum has gone on strengthening its Blaue Reiter section with the addition of a large number of Klee and some important Franz Marcs. But there is nothing by Macke, and only a single Feininger, although the latter was born and died in New York itself.

Strangest of all, perhaps, given the supremacy of Kandinsky in the collection as a whole, is the fact that there has been no attempt to incorporate into its fabric anything by Gorky or any of the early work of the other great American abstractionists. The final, lyrical and most intensely personal flowering of Gorky's art resulted from the fact that with his discovery of Kandinsky he had at last found a father figure with whom he could relax and "discourse" freely. Jack-

son Pollock worked briefly, in 1943, as a custodian in the museum, and some of the most truly "automatic" drawings of the period, of crucial importance to his painting, show an affinity with Kandinsky's use of line. Clifford Still's emergence in the mid-1940s as one of the most abrasive and original artists of his generation owed much to a study of the master. Rothko's contemporary work mirrors some of the imagery and the mood of Klee and Ernst. Still and Rothko did not, it must be admitted, emerge as major figures on an international scale until the second half of the decade, and Still's early work has remained unobtainable and virtually unseen. On the other hand two of their less significant colleagues have found a niche in the collection with relatively minor works. The museum has accepted a bequest of two figurative and somewhat conventional portraits by Franz Kline of 1944-45. And with the acquisition of the estate of Karl Nierendorf in 1958

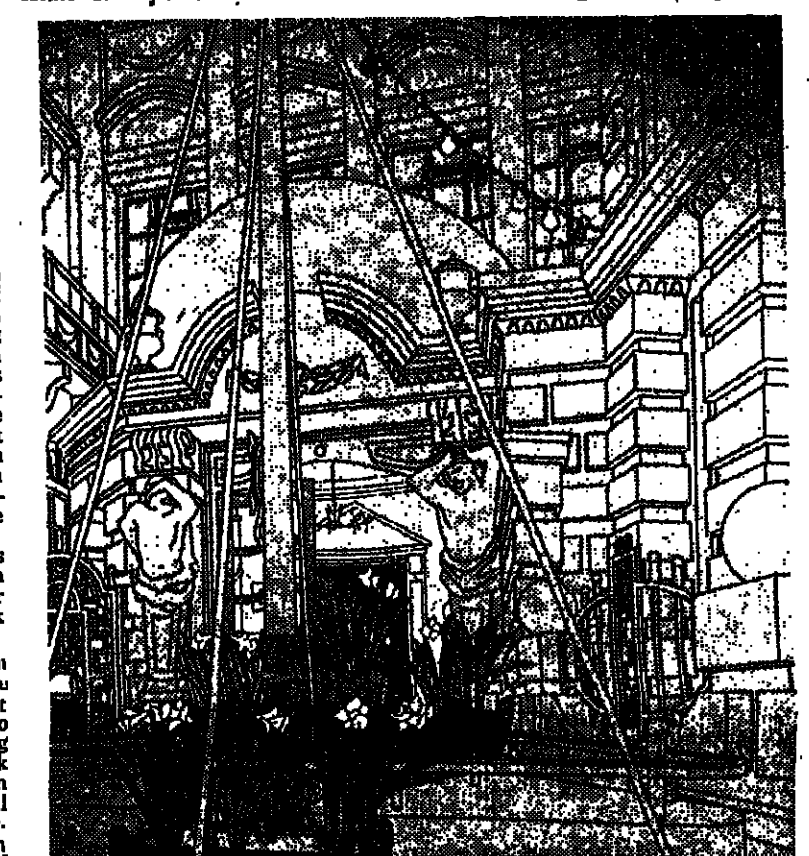
there came a group of "pictographic" canvases by Gottlieb. But if the collection has its eccentricities and its lacunae, as well as its stars and its large number of individual masterpieces, Angelica Zander Rujenstine's catalogue is notable for its consistency and its almost uniform excellence. It is a major work of scholarship and the first catalogue on this scale to accompany a collection of modern art, although Ronald Alley's catalogue of the foreign collections of the Tate is imminent, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York has published exhaustive catalogues of its holdings of individual artists; these latter, however, although invaluable, really take the form of monographs and do not contain, for example, reports on the physical condition of individual works.

The Guggenheim catalogue was put together, we are told by Mr Messer, in "a half decade of research". It reads more like half a lifetime's labour. All the major source books on modern art have been carefully scrutinized and the arguments within them on questions of dating and interpretation

objectively assessed; errors of fact by other scholars (including myself) are courteously righted. Surviving artists and the widows and families of those dead have been interviewed; of the statements recorded those by Messer and Chagall are particularly detailed and revealing.

There are extracts from a fascinating and partly unpublished correspondence between Hilla von Rebay and Kandinsky concerning the distinction between non-objective art, defined by her (elsewhere) as conceived out of the intuitive enjoyment of space itself, and abstract art which is ultimately derived, she felt, from actual objects or observed phenomena. Recent Kandinsky scholarship has demonstrated, as Mrs Rujenstine shows, that in the years between 1911 and the very end of 1913 Kandinsky was not as "non-objective" as either he or the bronzes would have us believe. (One longs to know more about this colourful and bizarre lady, and I understand that the projected catalogue on works of the post-1945 period will have an introductory section on the history of the collection in which she will doubtless loom large.) Unpublished theses and dissertations have been consulted, and for the specialist one of the rewards of a careful study of the two volumes of the catalogue is the opportunity of catching up on the present state of research in every area on which the collection and the catalogue touch.

What is so sympathetic about the scholarship contained in the catalogue, and could not fail to communicate itself to the devotee of painting as well as to professional art-historians, is that it reveals not so much an enjoyment in the amassing of a vast number of facts, details and information, as a relentless search for the truth and a deep and genuine respect for every work that has been listed. Inevitably in a work of this nature and scope scholars will find minor points with which to gubbe and disagree. In one or two instances, for example, the argument concerning dating is so complex as to be a little hard to follow. The traditional date of 1916 for Mondrian's still life (catalogue No. 182), which has been overcautiously shifted to c. 1913-16, is almost certainly correct. I feel that Mrs Rujenstine's reading of Austrian history in the nineteenth century in connection with Marc's *Das arme Land Tirol* (catalogue No. 176) is somewhat far-fetched, and I suspect that the title is not so much a reflection of troubled times as a reference to the refrain of an immensely popular song, the *Andreas Hofer Lied* by Julius Moser (1803-67). But basically the catalogue is a triumph, and it has been most handsomely produced.



"Foracourt" by Patrick Caulfield: from the catalogue to the British Council's exhibition in Milan earlier this year, English Art Today 1960-76 (2 volumes: 466pp, 445 illustrations. Milan: Electra Editrice).

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MACMILLAN LONDON

A singular rebel

By E. S. Turner

REGINALD POUND:
A. P. Herbert
312pp. Michael Joseph. £7.25.

In the last instalment of his autobiography, Sir Alan Herbert, who described himself as "a miscellaneous person", asked: "How can such a chameleon expect a state of respectful gaze from anyone?" He made no claim to be a Renaissance man; but, says Reginald Pound, such a claim "might not unjustly be made for him".

It is instructive to see how the Establishment honoured, and omitted to honour, one who was reformer, parliamentarian, novelist, journalist, verse-writer, librettist, polemicist and so much else. His name went forward for a life peerage, but he lacked party qualifications; instead he was appointed a Companion of Honour. Oxford University, reviewing his variegated talents, decided to make him a Doctor of Civil Law. Winchester looked slightly askance at one who untrammelled MPs asked to appear in lights. "He was never received ad portas by the College, ceremony with which it innoctus his famous alumni", records Mr Pound. In America he had friends indeed. On his death four pages of the Congressional Record were occupied by eulogies from congressmen. Inquiries showed no record of a similar tribute to another English writer in the proceedings of Congress. Mr Pound knew his fellow Savage well; well enough to tell us that A.P.H. had a "tonic speciality" concocted for him—or so he was persuaded—and that he was "a life-long admirer of the Hornbrook belly-rotation formula". A.P.H. was no true hypochondriac, however. Had he, perhaps, a different kind of malaise? "One remembers him from the thirties as the most companionable of all the least confiding of men."

writes Mr Pound. There was a "peculiar private reticence that baffled those who most closely shared his life and affections, and was liable to disconcert those who did not. Emotionally, he always seemed to be on his guard." The origin of this reticence eludes the biographer; apparently it was there in boyhood after the death of his mother when he was eight. The trouble, if trouble it was, was not self-centredness or morbid introspection. He suffered from World War, but "never afterwards did he reach affinity with the great company of neurotics from whose tortments most masterpieces have come."

A.P.H. was of the generation which passed straight from university into the trenches. From Dardanelles and the Western Front he sent polished verses to *Punch*. More important, he wrote *The Secret Battle* (later republished with a foreword by Winston Churchill), the shooting for "cowards" of a fellow officer in the Royal Naval Division. *The Secret Battle*, suggests Mr Pound, was a feat of war-born nightmares racked by the early married life he entered "unarmed" that produced better poetry than his for the post-war anthologies. In later years he resented the notion propagated in *Oh What a Lovely War* that his generation had been duped into joining up.

In 1924 he joined the staff of *Punch* at a salary of £50 a week, a substantial sum for those days. As a member of the Table he enjoyed the bizarre privilege, long since reached, of sending his copy (handwritten in pencil) direct to the printer; the editor saw it for the first time in proof. Much of what he wrote was light verse, a craft which had been brought to high-society and excessive-perfection by Sir Owen Seaman and E. V. Rieu, though Belloc overshadowed the three of them.

All these practitioners prided themselves on never twisting a word or a phrase for the sake of a rhyme and whatever laws they broke it was not the laws of metre. Today we have a generation of writers, sub-editors and proof-readers with an ear for scansion. All too often in this book A.P.H.'s verse is misquoted, usually by omission of words, with the result that one keeps tripping over lame lines as over a loose carpet. The celebrated Second World War verses beginning "Let's have less nonsense from the friends of Joe" (which led to strike threats by aircraft workers and a characteristic Commons question by D. N. Pritt, KC) contain three such mistakes. The correct version of the poem is in the *New Oxford Book of Twentieth Century Verse*.

Unlike Seaman and Knox, A.P.H. later wrote a more relaxed, made-to-be-sung lyric for the stage, but here, too, his technique was faultless and free from Gilbertian clumsiness. Eventually he was able to make verse pay off abundantly. *Bless the Bride*, the Cockney-produced musical, ran for more than two years and on his 1949-50 income A.P.H. paid £8,383 in tax.

Punch made a well-paid base for "misleading cases" and attacks on jargon, but many of his sprightliest letters were launched from that unpaid platform, the letters page of *The Times*. By his own reckoning A.P.H. had "perhaps a thousand" letters published. Occasionally he received a rebuke from the editor, who asked him to be good enough not to send letters elsewhere. In one of his last contributions to *The Times*, a feature article, he deplored the way "a worthy struggle for reasonable liberty for honest writers" appeared to have ended up in freedom for actors to dangle their private parts over the footlights.

How, one wonders, did A.P.H. tackle his constituency duties, or was he, as a university member, spared the holding of "surgeries"?



Drawing of A. P. Herbert by Sir Bernard Partridge from the cover of Reginald Pound's biography.

And what, one also wonders, was in Churchill's mind when, over lunch at Downing Street in the Second World War, he asked A.P.H. "Would you like a job?" The reply was "No, thank you, sir, I'm quite happy where I am." Atlee caught him on the raw by describing university seats as pocket boroughs. "I should be grateful if the Prime Minister would explain whose pocket I was in," said A.P.H.

He had a love affair with the Thames; was "the first man of letters" to swim from Waterloo Bridge to Westminster Bridge; and, doubtless, the only man of letters to steam in a motor boat, in dense wartime fog, for an hour and a half along the Thames without seeing the shore. His finest story lies up alongside *Discovery* during the blitz and the crew helped to salvage books from the flooded basement of Methuen, his publisher, in Essex Street.

It is sad to read of A.P.H.'s dwindled fortunes in late years. He lost favour at *Punch* (and did not count his belief that the new generation of editors could not draw) in 1961-63 the magazine, try-

ing to shake off a reputation for "squareness", declined thirty-five of his articles. Writers ought to be rejected, since every biographer cunningly he relied upon to quote as discreetly as Mr Pound. Perhaps they ought also to burn copies of their peevish letters to the *Times*. Revenue, for not all A.P.H.'s communications to the taxman were good-tempered appeals in rhyme. "He subverted his Britishness by dispersing his energies among enterprises and ill-fated hippies." The idea was hatched, turning him into a company, had dock Productions Ltd, but he was not the sort of man to produce work; too many buses were buzzing in his head. The unnamed "young directors" wound up the company. Referring to two long unpublished letters to *The Times*, involving a Summer Time, Mr Pound says they "read now as if they were written under a compulsive necessity that was not of the intellect; a self-persecuting drive that had its own peculiar satisfaction; a tragic dominion of his psychic life."

Happily he never lost his gift for spotlighting absurdities, as when he complained that the Chancellor had made it possible for an author to buy dinner for his American publisher but not his British one. (He gleefully, if unproductively, would have led the attack on the imbecilities of VAT.) Even his sidereal obsessions were shared with a little solar system, visible only by the reflected light of an aesthetic luminary.

One of Mr Pound's judgments, based on an American tour in 1921, is that A.P.H. was "a singularly unimpaired man"; certainly he is missed to being a bad sighter. Gipsy died up alongside *Discovery* during the blitz and the crew helped to salvage books from the flooded basement of Methuen, his publisher, in Essex Street. It is sad to read of A.P.H.'s dwindled fortunes in late years. He lost favour at *Punch* (and did not count his belief that the new generation of editors could not draw) in 1961-63 the magazine, try-

MEMOIRS

One's company

By Richard Mayne

JOYCE GRENFELL:
Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure
295pp. Macmillan. £4.95.

A telly generation probably knows her best from Joseph Cooper's musical quiz programme, outdone by Robin Ray or Richard Baker, gently joking with Bernard Levin: a graceful, well-dressed, middle-aged lady with a faintly nasal voice, a poised, comforting calm, a nice lady, the listener's representative among celebrities and experts.

Older fans will have a different picture. I remember chiefly her incarnation of "Fern Brixton"—a gaunpling wrapped overgrown girl too Morris-dance to be trusted, dancing barefoot to keep in touch with the Earth Thought Forces. There was also Miss Gossage ("Call me 'Sausage'") in the film *The Happiest Days of Your Life*; Ruby Gates in the St Trinian's series; the nursery school teacher worsted by the awful Sydney; or Shirli's girlfriend in her plastic mac going out with Norm. Each recalls an era of little revues, *How* programmes on the radio, Ronald Searle's school wit; he put at the expense of the audience, voices, foreigners, Cockneys, the uncertain, the awkwardly high-brow. In some respects, it was a conservative age; but the best of its products had enormous zest, and a few of them were kindly as well as sharp.

Joyce Grenfell was and is both. Her "Shirli's girlfriend" is condescended to, certainly: Cockney accent, trumpy elegance, mass produced low-grade pleasures. But the girl has spirit, and a sense of humour, she comes off like a "terrible worrier". Like a middle-aged Buckinghamshire cottage-dweller — is finely observed, richly comic (she posts a rabbit by mistake), and full of warmth. Only the accent works a little. But that in turn is part of the charm: behind the professional performer one glimpses the endearing amateur. One feels invited in.

From Joyce Grenfell's songs and monologues it might have been possible to ghost an autobiography. A happy childhood with understanding parents; no family movie worries — perhaps a hint of great houses for country holidays; much dressing up and play-acting; a good education; a congenial marriage; the chance of professional stage work after a time done at a private party. From then on, theatrical autobiographies write themselves. Is *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure* that kind of book?

In part, it is. The backstage sections are sketchy, dull with names, but lacking either the amateurish wonder (such as Dickens might have invoked) or the professional's precision (as in the novels of Douglas Haynes). That said, the rest of the book is a delight. It begins with a captivating account of Joyce Grenfell's American mother — beautiful, imaginative, flirtatious — an enchanting mamma from a story-book. Her father, too, was kind and funny and dependable. It sounds too good to be true; and it was. The marriage broke up. The parents stayed together until the children seemed old enough to bear their separation; but the wrench was obviously huge, and the scars remain. Joyce Grenfell was no sympathy on herself: the only peg for distress in the book seems to have been her wedding-dress, made for her, badly, by a dressmaker not of her choice. But reticence can be telling, and the sense of a paradise lost is very real. Later, this is echoed by the death of her nephew, Wilson, much loved in the absence of any children of her own. Ordinary tragedies, no doubt, in an ordinary family; but what other tragedies do any of us experience?

Like one of her own heroines, in "Boat Train", for example, Joyce Grenfell smiles and makes the best of things, with a courage and humour that in retrospect seem typical of her generation and her class. "I am not prepared to go into it now but my belief is that Life is contradictory," she says. Shades of Fern Brixton? Perhaps, but with proper privacy and sure articulation, a feeling of instant, widely shared, the briskness recalls a well-ordered household, with no time to mope.

Such households, it appears, were a permanent background to the

story, either her mother's pile rooms with bright flowers and branches, or her aunt Lady Astor's Clivedon opulence, or her own homes in country or town. Beside the Astors, the Grenfells must have seemed poor relations; but there was always someone in the background, a cook or housekeeper, to look after them and spare Joyce Grenfell, like a mother spared by a nanny and so able to entertain the children without stint.

The children, in this case, are the audience. Joyce Grenfell's acts grew partly from family amusement; her first monologue, "Useful and Acceptable Gifts", was accurately based on a Women's Institute lecture. But towards the end of the book, when she talks about her distant relative Ruth Draper, one begins to realise that the theatrical world flowed into the family far more amply than her early recollections might suggest. She was a Phipps, and Nicholas and Simon Phipps are her cousins. The tradition from private fun to public entertainment was not exclusively abrupt. Describing it, she becomes absorbing:

"Madam President—Fellow Institute members—good evening. I spoke in the dignity way of the original speaker and I suppose the audience recognised the authenticity of what I said and how I said it. We were off. I said a line. They laughed. I said another. They laughed. It was a sort of game, with me holding back the next line till the public last moment and then letting them have it. An audience, a responsive audience, was what I had missed in all those dull rehearsals."

She misses it on radio, too. Hearing her monologues without an audience is a cold affair, and despite experience she seems less at home at the mike. There were moments, too, during the war, when her audiences in overseas service hospitals seemed out of touch with the whole work of her irony, which some would dismiss as cosy and middle-class. These are only its trappings; but some people are easily put off.

Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure touches only lightly on technique. It becomes most explicit when dealing with Ruth Draper, who clearly felt some uneasiness with a possible rival. There was no real comparison, either personally or professionally: Ruth Draper was an awesome lady, larger than life, with immense bodily talent as well as a wicked ear. She peopled a stage by gesture. Joyce Grenfell is hardly in that grade. But Ruth Draper's monologues were iron-hard, set, finite. Joyce Grenfell writes new material, makes changes, does many things—including singing in her pleasant, tuneful trill. One can hardly imagine Ruth Draper warbling "You'd be so easy to love."

This was the song that Joyce Grenfell first recorded, on the advice of Carroll Gibbons, whose Orpheans used to play at the Savoy Hotel. The very name shimmers with nostalgia—as does much of this book. Unlike any ghosted footlights narrative, it authentically summons departed spirits, and leaves the impression of a busy, unselfconscious, well used life. The persona that emerges is very likable, and not far from some of Joyce Grenfell's characters. On the afternoon of her theatrical debut, she went with a friend to Selfridge's restaurant "where I drank three breakfast cups and ate a toasted bun and some layer cake". Odd today, in a world lost by inflation, unemployment, urban guerrillas, hijacked aircraft, soccer thugs, and fashionable Marxism. But kindness, self-mockery, high spirits, and funny songs may prove more durable. Joyce Grenfell's cake has quite a few layers to it still.

Allardyce Nicoll's *World Drama* (1955pp. Harrap. £16) was first published in 1949 and has now been revised and enlarged in a second edition with a final section that covers the theatre of 1945-73 in the United States, England and Ireland, France and Belgium, the German-speaking countries, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Spain and Brazil, India, Australia and Africa; each of the surveys is written by a dramatist or critic from the country in question. Earlier chapters have also been extensively revised.

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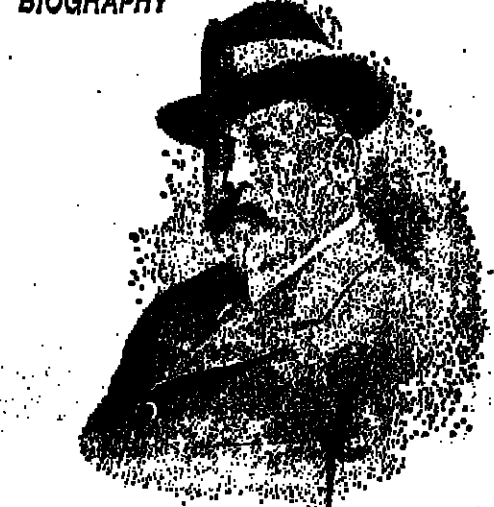
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JONATHAN CAPE

Along party lines

By Henry Pelling

JOHN MAHON:
Harry Pollitt
567pp. Lawrence and Wishart, £6.

HUGO DEWAR:
Communism: Politics in Britain
from its Origins to the
Second World War
159pp. Pluto Press, £1.80.

The Communist Party of Great Britain is now fifty-six years old, and for just over half its life—from 1929 to 1960—Harry Pollitt was in the eyes of most people both inside and outside the party, its principal spokesman. The son of a blacksmith's strike at Openshaw, near Manchester, he was apprenticed as a boiler-maker and thus became a member of one of the most exclusive trade societies in the country. But like his parents, he soon became interested in socialism and was active in the British Socialist Party, the Marxist organisation which had developed out of the old Social Democratic Federation. But whereas Hyndman and a section of the party supported Britain's cause in the First World War, Pollitt stayed with the larger segment of the party which opposed it. He was, however, a skilled man of military age and he took a major part in the celebrated Jolly George boycott to prevent the shipment of arms to Poland

In 1918, when he was already twenty-eight, he was employed at a Thames ship repair yard, and there he helped to found the Thames Shop Stewards Movement. He took a major part in the celebrated Jolly George boycott to prevent the shipment of arms to Poland

for use against the new Bolshevik state; and "the Bolshevik" was already known as "the Bolshevik". Entering the Communist Party on its foundation in 1920, he visited the Soviet Union for the first time in July of the following year. Attending the Third Congress of the Comintern, he was introduced briefly to Lenin himself: "That handshake meant everything to me and I seemed to walk on air to my place in Congress." For a time he was secretary of the British Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions (the Profintern) and then was secretary of the body that took its place in Britain, the Minority Movement. In 1925, four days after his wedding, he was arrested with other Communist leaders, put on trial at the Old Bailey and sentenced to a year's imprisonment. He thus missed the General Strike. In spite of this, he travelled widely on Communist missions—by 1930 he had visited the Soviet Union no less than twenty-seven times—but it was not until 1929 that he emerged as the general secretary of the British party. This post he was to hold, with one interval of twenty-one months, until after the devastating Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956.

This official biography, by one of his closest colleagues, the late John Mahon, has the advantage of using Pollitt's own papers and the reminiscences of his closest friends and associates; but it has the disadvantage of being markedly uncritical, both of Pollitt himself and of the Communist policy in his time. The publishers assert that it is an "exposition of Pollitt's consistent stand and leadership", whereas, as is effectively demonstrated in Hugo Dewar's pamphlet,

the party and all its members were frequently being expected to change their policy (or, as Mahon would put it, their "perspective"), largely in order to keep up with the domestic external requirements of Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union. As the book is an attempt to make Pollitt's life appear consistent, it largely takes up with a catalogue of Communist demonstrations and fraternal delegations, which, as comes tedious after a time, it is an account of Pollitt's birthplace near Manchester and where he served his apprenticeship. It also gives some impression of the glow of his appearance—his stocky figure and George Robey eyebrows—and occasionally hints at a genuine sense of humour. At some points the book descends to note form, and wonders if Mahon would have expanded these sections into a narrative if he had lived. Even so, the prospects of the author, himself a life-long functionary in the party, are hardly grappling with the real problem of Pollitt's life would have been remote.

Most of these problems are laid out with the relationship of the Russian form of communism to the British form. It is not enough for Pollitt to have been Lenin as the architect of a revolution in his own country, especially so soon after it had happened, and to the point where he was "walking on air" after meeting the great man. But there is no mention of the lavish subsidies which the Comintern for years poured into British left-wing groups, even though Pollitt's close ally in the TLS in May 1966 that he had

them an "embarrassment" and wished they could be stopped. Dutt also revealed that in 1923 the "International Executive" had blundered the way to the election of Pollitt as party secretary; no mention of this contrivance finds its way into Mahon's narrative. The shifts of policy dictated by Lenin's successor, Stalin, are not adequately dealt with, and Stalin is even mentioned until the outbreak of war in 1939. Meanwhile, as is well documented by Mr Dewar, there has been the extraordinary episode of "Class against Class" in 1929-33, when the Comintern had ordered its sub-sections to denounce all sympathizers on the left, to decry social democrats as "Social Fascists", and even to establish separate trade unions to oppose the existing ones. Mahon says of Pollitt:

Recognition of the deep roots of the craft unions made him an adamant opponent of all tendencies to form breakaway or new unions. He was confident that with experience and political education the members' outlook would broaden and develop to industrial unionism and class consciousness.

Yet it was precisely at this time that Pollitt, together with Palme Dutt, came to leadership with a policy of obedience to the new edicts from Moscow, which the previous leaders, to their credit, had found difficult to swallow. Pollitt even went with a German Comintern representative to the United States in order to bully the American Communist Party to accept the same viewpoint. The American party was larger and more ready to buckle its belt into two factions, but Pollitt's strength, one Stalinist and one Trotskyist.

Of course, when the Nazis established their power in Germany, Soviet foreign policy had to be hastily adjusted. The Comintern again discovered virtue in the idea of a "united front" with other left-wing organizations, and Pollitt

became its most powerful exponent in Britain. At the seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, the adulation of the Soviet leader rose to the heights of hero-worship that in Germany were reserved for Adolf Hitler. There followed the Moscow trials and the almost complete destruction of the Comintern apparatus itself at the hands of Stalin. The only comment that Mahon affords himself on this in the course of his narrative is in mention, in a footnote, that the arrest of Rose Cohen, whom Pollitt had much admired when she was working in London for the Labour Research Department, "was a great sorrow to Harry who did not believe her guilty and made every effort to get her case reviewed."

When on September 24, 1939, David Springhall—later sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for espionage—returned from Moscow with the news that the three-week-old war was "an out-and-out imperialist war to which the working class in no country could give any support," it seemed to be to Pollitt's credit that he should have already well-publicized anti-fascist views and was removed from the secretaryship of the party. He momentarily proposed to return to his occupation of boiler-maker, and wrote to his mother that "the four are still in the Vaseline"; but as early as November, 1939, he declared to the central committee of the party his "unreserved acceptance of the policy of the Party and of the Comintern." He was then employed for some months in the party's Lancashire district. It was not until the spring of 1941 that as a skilled craftsman he was obliged to return to manual work at the London Graving Dock. Two months later Hitler invaded the Soviet Union; the British party's line again switched round; and almost at once Pollitt was back in King Street as general secretary of the party.

During the ensuing months the Communists in Britain backed in the reflected glory of the success of the

Red Army. Membership rose to its highest recorded total—56,000 in 1942. Pollitt himself engaged vigorously—he was nothing if not vigorous—in the "united front" second front at the earliest possible moment and in urging greater production in the factories, even at the expense of workers' standards and conditions.

After the Yalta Agreement of February 1945, which represented the high peak of inter-allied solidarity, he wrote a booklet entitled *How to Win the Peace* which urged the maintenance of the Coalition Government after the end of the war. (In this at least he was at one with Clement Attlee, who tried to persuade the Labour Party Executive to continue the coalition on Churchill's terms. Attlee was defeated and, much to his own surprise, discovered himself being invited to be Prime Minister.) When the general election of 1945 took place, Pollitt fought hard in East London and secured over 45 per cent of the poll. It was the closest that he came to parliamentary success; thereafter the party's electoral performance was on a downward path, and in 1950 all but seven of their 100 candidates forfeited their deposits—or, as Hugh Dalton put it, "made a contribution to the Treasury."

By 1950 Pollitt was sixty years old, and his health had begun to deteriorate. In April 1949 he suffered a kick on the spine at an exceptionally rowdy meeting at Dartmouth, where he was held personally responsible for the casualties by Chinese Communist shelling on board HMS Amethyst, a gunboat, serving on the Yangtze River. For some time he had been wearing a corset to keep in place a slipped disc. In March 1953 he was fit enough to stand in the guard of honour at the bier of Joseph Stalin; and in February 1956 he attended the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist Party, but was not admitted to the closed session at which Khrushchev delivered his attack upon the record of Stalin. In fact the revelations of Stalin's misdeeds, which were published shortly afterwards in the much-maligned "capitalist press", appeared to come as a severe shock to Pollitt in spite of his countless visits to the Soviet Union and his concern with the intricacies of the machinery of which he personally knew. His health deteriorated still more and he resigned the secretaryship of the party, but was at once "kicked upstairs" to the less onerous post of chairman. From then on he spent even more time on visits to fraternal parties abroad and on seaside curatives. He had just completed a visit to Australia in 1960 when he died of a stroke on the P. & O. liner Orion.

Mahon's book is mainly of interest for the non-political aspects of Pollitt's life—his upbringing, his health, and some of the quirks of his personality. Hugo Dewar is solely interested in the politics of the party in its first twenty-five years; and he writes of many of them from personal experience, as well as from a scholarly study of sources.

Although he emphasizes that the founders of the British party were "for the most part despairing of the nation's social and political future," he regrets that they were "subject to... the pressures from the Russian environment." In his view there was nothing wrong in the party obeying the leadership of the International, given that there actually existed a revolutionary world party. In which a struggle for power was unthinkable, domination by any one section impossible. This seems the view of an idealist; and it comes as no surprise if we recall that Mr Dewar was himself one of the Balham Group who in 1932 formed the first tiny nucleus of British Trotskyists and suffered expulsion from the Communist Party for opposing the rigidity of "Class against Class." As he says: "In Britain, the influence of the Russian line was baleful. In Germany, it was catastrophic and led directly to Hitler's conquest of power." He points out how on every occasion, sometimes a little slowly, he himself adapted himself to the Soviet line and by March, 1945, was hailing the "wisdom and statesmanship of the United Nations' leaders." It is on this note that he concludes his succinct piece of destructive criticism.

Could they [the founders of the party] ever have conceived it possible that the Party would degenerate to this—that one day its most admired and respected leader would hail this "wisdom and statesmanship" of the ruling class?

The Russian connection

By Kenneth O. Morgan

DANIEL F. CALHOUN:
The United Front
The TUC and the Russians, 1923-1928
450pp. Cambridge University Press, £10.50.

Commentators on Britain's General Strike at the time of its fiftieth anniversary last May, treated it almost exclusively as an episode in British industrial and political history. The monographs that were published (many of them of high quality, especially those of G. A. Phillips and Patrick Ronshaw), the television series that were produced, all dwelt on domestic issues—on wage negotiations in the British coal industry; on the relationship between the TUC and the Labour Party; on the sociology of Britain's post-war class structure; and on the psychology of Baldwin's Conservative government. The "little Englanders" dominated the argument. And yet, many observers in 1926, on the left and the right alike, saw the nine days of May somewhat differently. They viewed, to some degree, in international terms, as a decisive test of the prospects for working-class insurrection in western Europe. The General Strike was a touchstone for the revolutionary movement in Britain, as it was for the revolutionary movement in Russia.

The Russian dimension of Britain's industrial conflicts in 1926 attracted special interest. Lloyd George, at the time of the denunciation of the Bolshevik subversion of the British trade union movement, Churchill and Birkhead took up the refrain when their old leader disavowed it. The Zinoviev trial of the Campbell case; the rise of A. J. Cook ("the humble worker") as general secretary of the British trade union movement; the financial links between the TUC General Council and the Russian trade unions; the growth of

militant offshoots like the National Minority Movement—all added fuel to their charges. During the General Strike, Birkhead claimed that it was the success from Moscow while Joyntman-Hughes informed the Cabinet that the strike had been financed from Russian government agencies from its very first day. Later that year, Commander Lockyer, Labour MP, could fill an upturned tin with his "Clear Out the Reds" slogan. The following year, after the Arctic raid had produced alleged evidence of Russian subversion within British industry, diplomatic relations with the Soviet government, severed by the Red scare lobby in Parliament, press and Cabinet, justified all the credit for a breach, and, no doubt, historic necessity as well.

These links between the TUC and the Russians were not just the figments of the over-heated imagination of British right-wing politicians. On the contrary, they were taken seriously, seriously in Moscow itself. From 1923 the Soviet leaders, on the Central Committee and the Comintern, regarded Britain as a crucial test for the new after the failure of the revolutionary uprisings in western and central Europe in 1919-21. Extraordinary though it may seem, in view of the Russian Revolution, the Russian revolution was seen as a test of the revolutionary movement in Britain, as it was for the revolutionary movement in Russia. The Russian trade union leader, M. I. Tomsky, its dominant figure, regarded it as an effective instrument for international trade-union co-operation: the triumph of "Red Friday" (July 31, 1925) was seen as a victory for the United Front. The fact that ninety per cent of the financial support for the General Strike came from Russian trade unionists showed that the Committee had practical purpose as well as propaganda effect.

Even so, to the acid soil of the non-Communist West, the Russian Committee was always a delicate plant. The collapse of the General Strike, and the international regulations that followed, condemned the Committee to oblivion. The Committee continued to proclaim its "united front" strategy until 1928.

It would help neutralize any possibility of armed attack from Britain (taken seriously in Russia, however), and it may seem to students of British defence policies after 1929. More, it would ultimately help to credit all the "reformist" leaders whatever the TUC General Council of whatever "reformist" leader, Thomas to Alvinus Stewards, installing revolutionary fervour in the rank-and-file workers through collaboration on bread-and-butter issues.

Indeed, the "united front" with the British TUC became very much a part of the Russian policy. It was attacked by the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenyev Oppositionists, who argued that collaboration with the British "reformists" was inevitably self-defeating, and that only through the Communist Party could a genuine workers' uprising be launched. "Without a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer," wrote Trotsky. But Stalin's view prevailed. He had the votes on the Central Party Committee—and in the case, there was evidence that the Russian contacts were striking significant roots in Britain. There were willing agents on the British General Council, notably Patrick Lockyer and Swales, both sentimental admirers of the Soviet system. "Direct action" by British trade unionists, dating from Council of Action days. Even right-wingers in the TUC, untroubled by break-away communist-led unions, were far more confident in establishing a bridge to the Russian unions than were their continental counterparts. The result was the Anglo-Soviet Committee, formed in April 1925, with the Russian trade union leader, M. I. Tomsky, its dominant figure, regarded it as an effective instrument for international trade-union co-operation: the triumph of "Red Friday" (July 31, 1925) was seen as a victory for the United Front. The fact that ninety per cent of the financial support for the General Strike came from Russian trade unionists showed that the Committee had practical purpose as well as propaganda effect.

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Trotsky's crusade against it led to his expulsion from the Central Committee, from the Communist Party, finally from Russia itself. He downed the Russian revolution, and British TUC. But, on the British side, the Russian connection had brought only confusion, bitterness and disunity. The right wing majority on the General Council, with Thomas and Pugh in the lead, had been in a sense, was the work of British TUC. But, on the British side, the Russian connection had brought only confusion, bitterness and disunity. The right wing majority on the General Council, with Thomas and Pugh in the lead, had been in a sense, was the work of British TUC. But, on the British side, the Russian connection had brought only confusion, bitterness and disunity. The right wing majority on the General Council, with Thomas and Pugh in the lead, had been in a sense, was the work of British TUC.

This complex story is unravelled by Professor Calhoun with much skill and learning. Even though the style is somewhat laborious in the final chapter, where references to "bosses" and "stooges" are presumably meant to add colour to the narrative, the book as a whole is presented with clarity and often with humour, and forms a most valuable contribution to international labour history. Its great strength clearly lies in its treatment of Russian policies in the 1920s. The author has worked industriously on Russian sources, and sheds important new light on the arguments that surrounded the "united front" strategy. On the dialectical conflicts between Stalin and Trotsky; on the attitude of the Soviet leaders to their own trade union movement, and to the free trade union international based on

Amsterdam; on more detailed issues such as the rivalry between the trade unionist, M. P. Tomsky, and Aleksandr Losovsky of the Red International of the party, but was at once "kicked upstairs" to the less onerous post of chairman. From then on he spent even more time on visits to fraternal parties abroad and on seaside curatives. He had just completed a visit to Australia in 1960 when he died of a stroke on the P. & O. liner Orion.

As a study in British labour history, the book is rather less authoritative. There is nowhere a clear analysis of the structure and tradition of the British trade union movement, while the treatment of the Labour Party is sketchy in the extreme. The roles of MacDonald ("the British Kerensky"), Clynes or Thomas would hardly become clear to the uninitiated. More seriously perhaps, the emphasis on trade union central organization and its central archive deflects attention away from the real impact of the Soviet experiment on local trade union leaders in Britain. For instance, Arthur Horne's autobiography (cited in the bibliography but not used in detail) casts important light on the regional and national responses of miners in South Wales. Professor Calhoun's notes in passing the particular strength of the Red International in the Celtic nations, but offers no comment or explanation. Viewed from the summit, from the standpoint of Clynes and the high politics of the General Council, the Russian connection in the 1920s added up to very little. The TUC always distrusted the Anglo-Russian Committee; it buried it, along with the influence of its erratic apostle, the French Polisher Albert Purcell, as soon as it decently could. Jimmy Thomas was as implacable an enemy of the committee as was Trotsky himself. Among the trade union rank-and-file in the different regions of Britain, however, it was rather different. Here, the contact with Russia could seem liberating and inspiring, a signpost to a workers' republic and a classless society. Here, the appeal of a united front, even a vital dialectical tool, a guide to theory and practice in the undermining of the fabric of capitalism. Here, as the history of the Welsh, Scottish and Yorkshire miners in the 1970s suggests, the themes as skilfully described by Professor Calhoun are not merely of antiquarian concern. They provide a living element in the stresses and conflicts underlying British society today. It is here, at the so-called "grass-roots", that the future study of union history, and to the free trade union international based on

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The tides of time

By Francis Watson

OTTO KURZ:
European Clocks and Watches in the Near East
109pp and 14 plates. The Warburg Institute, £9.

Otto Kurz, who died last year, was an unusually polymath scholar. Even as a schoolboy he had worked as a volunteer in the Österreichische Museum für Kunst und Industrie. After training in Vienna under Schlosser as an art-historian he joined the Warburg Institute just before its transfer from Hamburg to London and served as its librarian for many years before becoming professor of the history of the classical tradition with special reference to the Near East. A list of his publications reveals purely art-historical writings beside bibliographies of Jewish art, of Christian manuscripts illuminated in the Near East; studies of Marco Polo's travels on artistic fakes to exist. Such a range of subject-matter by no means indicates a superficial approach. The numerous footnotes to *European Clocks and Watches in the Near East* bear ample witness to an extraordinary breadth of reading. It was probably his Slavic lectures at Oxford on "Islamic Art between East and West" which led him to undertake, as a by-product, this recondite study.

Time was of cardinal importance in the Islamic world. From the foundation of Muhammadanism the mosque had been required to call the faithful to prayer at precisely set hours each day. As a consequence the book begins with a paradox. Down to the end of the thirteenth century Islamic horology was far in advance of European, and the tide of the supply of timepieces ran from the East to the West. The water-clock fitted with

complex automata sent by Harun ar-Raschid to Charlemagne in 807 is the best known instance of this, but the large number of Arabic astrolabes with bilingual inscriptions bears witness to wider East-West contacts in the field—for although astrolabes are not precisely clocks they were probably more used for telling the time than for any other scientific purpose.

But with the end of the thirteenth century Turkish interest in horology seems to have lost momentum. Islamic technology in this field suddenly became fossilized. This failure of nerve coincided with the invention of the mechanical clock in the West and the tide began to turn in the opposite direction. Mehmet II, the highly intelligent conqueror of Constantinople, was the first Turk to show an interest in European clocks, and after the peace treaty of 1477 asked the Venetian Signoria to send him a clock-maker. Mehmet's third successor, Süleyman, the "the Magnificent", had the ingenious idea of insulating that part of the Turkish tribute he paid in clocks.

Thereafter ambassadors of the European powers vied with one another to present the most splendid masterpieces of Western horology at the Sublime Porte. Important embassies were held up while the greatest craftsmen of Augsburg, Blois or London completed horological masterpieces fitted with automata and striking and musical devices of the utmost complexity.

The story of the combined clock and mechanical organ sent by Queen Elizabeth I to Mehmet II has already been turned into a lively book in Stanley Mayer's *An Organ for the Sultan*. But it is an isolated study. Some of the most interesting pages of this book contain descriptions of these ambassadorial presents. Far more clocks were sent than could possibly be needed for time-keeping. The tragic

consequence is that what was probably the greatest museum of Renaissance clocks ever assembled simply rusted away even though many ambassadors left a skilled mechanic to care for their own gift. Today visitors to the Turkish Saray see no trace whatever of this part of the Grand Turk's collections.

But the taste for European clocks seeped down from the court to other strata of Turkish society. By the end of the sixteenth century a colony of Western watchmakers had already become established in Galata to cater to such requirements. Simple seventeenth-century automata clocks with Turkish figures are sometimes found today. At first the immigrant clockmakers were generally Swiss from Geneva, but later they were joined by French and English craftsmen. Rousseau's father, for example, was one of the last to emigrate for this purpose. By this time, however, the Galata colony was dwindling and the trade in Western clocks and watches was becoming an import business. Voltaire was perceptive enough to realize this and established a workshop at Ferney to supply watches for Turkey. But by the eighteenth century the greater part of this export-import trade was in the hands of the English. Writing of Constantinople towards the end of the period, James Dallaway mentions that "English watches, prepared for the Levant market... are one of the first articles of luxury that a Turk purchases".

These watches have been mentioned in passing by many writers on horology. But none has dealt with the subject in any depth. Kurz identifies large numbers of the makers and their products, not merely those working in Constantinople but he even discusses craftsmen working as far afield as Jerusalem and Persia.

The trade continued to flourish for a considerable part of the nineteenth century and a section of the



Kermes Oak: a sixteenth-century illustration to a modern herbal, the 106 woodcuts reproduced in handsome proportions for Herbal, by Wood Krutch's study of the theories and discoveries of pre-Linnaean herbalists. (255pp, Oxford: Phaidon, Paperback, £5.95).

book is devoted to Edward Prior whose father George Prior had dominated the Turkish market in the eighteenth century and whose own name appears on many of the long-case clocks still to be seen in Turkish mosques, to the puzzlement of English tourists. Prior's last watches are dated 1869.

Today the trade is totally dead. When in 1925 Atatürk abolished adoption of international time there was no longer any call for special dials for the Turkish market which

was thereby opened up to the results of Western industrial watch production.

European Clocks and Watches in the Near East is not only a record of Western technology but also of Western mental attitudes. This set will certainly fascinate all interested in the history of clocks and watches but should also be of interest to those concerned with the general problem, so pertinent today, of relations between the West and the Near Eastern world.

CINEMA

Prague spring, Hollywood summer

By Igor Hajek

ANTONIN J. LIEHM:
The Milos Forman Stories
191pp. International Arts and Sciences Press, \$15.

It was an excellent idea that during the Czechoslovak cultural explosion of the mid-1960s Antonin Liehm should record his conversations with the writers, film-makers and thinkers who were at the centre of the two volumes of his interviews (*The Politics of Culture* and *Closely Watched Trains*) which, after it all had come to a sudden end, could only be published abroad, provide the student of recent East European history with background material often as interesting as the work of the people concerned. They also make sad reading: one realizes how much talent was thwarted, how many fresh ideas suppressed, what a loss European culture has suffered. In a few cases they are also a record of ideals now abandoned in favour of adjustment to changed conditions.

Milos Forman was luckier than most of his compatriots: he left in time—and has been more successful than most. In a series of anecdotes which read very much as if they were transcriptions of scenes from his films, and which are interspersed with reprints of Liehm's reviews, *The Milos Forman Stories* traces his career from his boyhood involvement with the theatre to the making of "The Decalogue" (part of the Olympic film *Visions of Eight*).

It was partly coincidence that brought Forman to films. Rejected by the drama school, he applied for admission to study law and, just to be on the safe side, signed up for the Prague film school as well. The interview at the film school was set for a Tuesday, the other for the next day; he was successful at the first one and did not try any further. "If I had studied law, I would probably have become a law-

yer who liked to go to the movies and the theatre. But since by accident I ended up at film school, I chose movie-making as my career. Afterward—not before."

This nonchalant attitude, and his ability to make the best of any set of circumstances (as well as to escape into sleep when problems present themselves) seem to have helped Forman to overcome a lot of difficulties, in particular his brushes with Stalinists—both the Prague and the Hollywood varieties. It is the circumstances and the times that really come to life in his tales. But the way he describes his experiences reveals a few things about his personality, too: the detachment suits the caustic out-

look of a satirist wonderfully, though there is a price to be paid for it somewhere.

He made a number of starts in Czechoslovakia, each of which was brought to an abrupt and colourful stop. Eventually he decided to make a film of his own, having worked on other people's films, and bought a 16mm camera. "I literally put my last money into it (I had bought a car with the next-to-last money)." Not knowing how to operate it, he asked for help from Miloslav Ondricek (later Lindsay Anderson's director of photography in *If...* and *Oh Lucky Man*).

This was the time when Czechoslovakia was bursting with young

talent which could find outlet only in the arts. Forman has a story to illustrate the point: it is that of the reluctant actor who played the hero in *A Blonde in Love* and subsequently became tremendously popular. His ambition, in fact, had always been to be a doctor, but he was not allowed to study medicine because of his family origins. At the peak of his popularity he quietly defected to Britain and has become a doctor here.

The stories are fascinating, instructive and amusing. Somehow near-disasters always turn into successes for Forman. Troubles with Czechoslovak officialdom were followed by the award of a State Prize by the chief fireman, President

Laughter at the anatomist's

By C. Vita-Finzi

TONY CHAPMAN and HUGH FOOT:
Humour and Laughter
Theory, Research and Applications
348pp. John Wiley, £9.50.

A. J. Chapman and H. C. Foot have brought together "some of the most important current thinking and research" in the psychology of humour and laughter. (Though not the only editors to include chapters by themselves, they are in my experience the first to drop all pretence at modesty.) The first part of the book, headed "Perceiving and responding to humour", shows that children and adults are likely to find different things funny (T. R. Shultz), that you can ruin jokes which depend on incongruity by presenting them as problems to be solved (M. K. Rothbart), that big surprises will probably be more startling than small ones (G. Nerhardt), and that many jokes depend on a feeling of superiority (L. La Fave, J. Haddad and W. A. Maessen).

We are also told that jokes against people we like tend to fall flat whereas jokes against people we despise are acceptable (D. Zillmann and J. R. Cantor), that it helps to be in the mood for jokes before hearing them (M. Godkewitch), that how you say it counts perhaps as much as what you say (H. Giles, R. Y. Bourhis, M. J. Gadfield, G. J. Davies and A. P. Davies), that laughing out loud will endear you to people (A. J. Chapman), including children (H. C. Foot and A. J. Chapman), that comedians are to be found everywhere, need butts and audiences, are often unkind, rude, male and ugly, that you laugh more freely among friends than among strangers, and that jokes allow you to say things you normally could or would not (H. R. Pollio and J. W. Edgerly). The second part of the book ("Using humour") tells us of the experiences of a Hollywood scriptwriter (W. F. Fry and M. Allen), shows the prominence accorded to cynical humour in the life of Trinidad (J. M. Jones and H. V. Liverpool), suggests that wit and humour have a part to play in mass communication (C. R. Gruener), reviews the attempts by W. E. O'Connell to understand why people are amused (W. E.

O'Connell), and advises therapists who commiserately wish to use humour in therapy to take themselves a little less seriously (H. Mindess).

The above summaries were obtained by condensing statements such as "the appreciation of humour is facilitated when the respondent feels antipathy or resentment towards disparaged protagonists" into English. As holding down here almost amounts to boiling away, one suspects that the evaporated jargon had been used for decoration where it might have served to differentiate between items we tend to lump together in everyday usage. In one or two places the omission is intentional: thus Bergler's partial list of fifty-five different kinds of smile was rejected by one of the contributors in favour of a unitary "operational definition". Again, the distinction between mirthful and non-mirthful smiling was found difficult to support empirically; Darwin did better (in 1872) by asking his acquaintances to decide which of two photographs of an old man showed a spontaneous smile.

In short, the book says little that was not put more succinctly in

The Psychology of Human (edited by H. Goldstein and P. B. McChes, Academic Press, 1972), although the cypresses quoted by Jones and Liverpool are delightful and there is much to ponder in Shultz's suggestions that certain games which produce laughter and smiles in very young children exploit behavioural traits acquired long ago to counter the dangers of abandonment and predation.

Public or at any rate journalistic response to the recent international congress on humour suggests that while psychologists tread on the sunny side of their beat they risk being labelled arrogant, foolish and, worst of all, humourless. According to Eysenck—in his illuminating foreword to the 1972 volume cited above—such "man-in-the-street ob-jurgations... have been encountered by every scientist who has attempted to extend the scope of his inquiries into new fields". This seems a little rough on Bacon, Borgeson, Hobbes, Freud and the rest; but what Eysenck has in mind is an experimental inquiry into humour. The cool heights of insight have long been scaled; to judge from this volume, the sweet foothills await their Masters and Johnson and their Kinsey.

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Proustian preciosities

By J. M. Cocking

PHILIP KOLB (Editor):

Correspondance de Marcel Proust
Volume 2
526pp. Paris: Plon. 60fr.

Philip Kolb writes of Antoine Bibesco that in personal acquaintance he found him open, lively, generous and fond of a joke; he therefore forgives him—almost—his monstrous misuse, in *Lettres à Bibesco* (1949) of the letters Proust wrote to him. Professor Kolb enviously sets his own facts right much more than putting right other people's; usually he simply points out in a discreet footnote that a letter as previously published had a faulty text, or that its dating is either unlikely or manifestly impossible. Antoine Bibesco's editorship sits him to such ironic incredulity that he cannot resist quoting La Fontaine: "Ce sont là jeux de prince".

In the preface to Bibesco's volume Thierry Maulnier drew attention to the long letter in which Proust set out his literary aims. Philip Kolb was convinced from early on that this letter was not authentic, but fabricated from chunks copied from the famous interview with Elie Joseph Bois of 1913; he threw doubt on it in the preface to his *Choix de lettres* in 1965 and said he had unsuccessfully pursued the original letter for many years. Since then he has found the originals of all the Bibesco letters and either made photocopies or acquired the holographs for the University of Illinois Library, which has probably the most important collection of Proust manuscripts outside France. Bibesco chopped his letters into bits which he rearranged, cemented with his own additions and dated as the fancy took him, sometimes ten years and sometimes with different dates for different fragments of the same letter. Quite pointlessly, as far as one can see, he changed some of the names of recipients of letters or of people referred to in them.

Such are the materials with which

biographers have had to build; the factual foundations for a detailed chronology of Proust's life are still shaky. Some of the mistakes that have been perpetuated are not so very important—Proust did not write to Bibesco what he said to Elie Joseph Bois, he did at least say it. Another instance of that Professor Kolb referred to in the preface to the first volume of the definitive *Correspondance* had rather more interesting repercussions. When the publication of *Jean Santeuil* made it clear that Proust was not idle between *Les Plaisirs et les Jours* and the *Ruskin* translations, a debate began about the years between *Ruskin* and *Contre Sainte-Beuve*. Was Proust already embarked on another attempt at a novel? And was it another dead end, or the beginning of *A la recherche*? One of the main arguments cited was the letter to Bibesco which Proust said that his mind was full of characters and ideas asking for embodiment. Bibesco dated it 1906; Philip Kolb showed it was written in 1902, when Proust was probably still thinking about *Jean Santeuil*.

The publishers' claim that Proust's autobiography is in the correspondence is less hyperbolic than most bluffs. It is quite true only for readers already familiar with the general pattern of Proust's life; for these, Philip Kolb's patient and skilful editing of the letters and his judicious selection of the literary and human level will bring not only corrections about facts and dates but subtler assessments of Proust's relations with other people and more insight into the complexity of the real into the imagined. A good deal of the material in this new volume is already familiar; it is largely thanks to Philip Kolb's earlier work, he edited the letters to Proust's mother and to Reynaldo Hahn, and ever since his monumental *Correspondance de Marcel Proust: chronologie et commentaires* critique of 1949 he has kept up an impressive series of commentaries and implications of the biographical letters and manuscripts of Proust. His datings and explanations have always clearly distinguished the certain from the probable or the possible; this volume suggests some slight alterations of previous con-

jectures, but most of the earlier work was too solid to need revision.

The previously unpublished letters, though they do not form the bulk of the volume, are full of interest; not simply the authentic texts of the letters to Bibesco, but some quite new items in the exchanges between Proust and Montesquiou which alter the lighting of that particular drama in Proust's life. Montesquiou and Proust's relations with him have been glorified, caricatured, depicted and mocked. The letters of Montesquiou formed the first volume (1930) of the *Correspondance générale* edited by Robert Proust and Paul Brach; they were the earliest to become generally known and given the eccentric and picturesque reputation that the Proust family already had, they shed light from the start on the main and picturesque Montesquiou certainly was; but something of the extravagance of the legend fades in the light of day. The new letters make one wonder how much of Montesquiou's hyperbole and preciseness was teasing Proust about his own. The letter of 1897 in which he replies to Proust's accusations of stabbing in the back has some small common sense about mischief makers and a shrewd perception of the relation between the man and the writer in Proust.

Voilà mes cœurs d'ailleurs. C'est encore un peu, éternel, pardessus le dos, mais vous qualifiez un peu de dissimulé; mais non jusqu'à ôter le discernement de vos défauts, donc vous faites la vertu de vos livres.

This second volume of the correspondence covers the years when Proust was struggling with *Jean Santeuil*, then turning to *Ruskin* and the architecture of the medieval cathedral. Since the letters are now arranged in chronological order, and include some letters to us as well as from Proust, they do form something of an autobiography, and approaching an autobiography in the sense of a diary, and are concerned, support each other like bricks in a wall. Professor Kolb includes, as he did in the first volume, a detailed chronology of events and a good index.

The sense of style

By Peter Fawcett

MARIA VAN KYSELBERGHE:

Les cahiers de la Petite Dame
Volume 3: 1937-1945
400pp. Paris: Gallimard. 57fr.

"English-born actress marries eminent French writer to escape Gestapo." Such might have been the headlines had Gide persisted in the foolhardy project which flashed across his mind when his daughter's drama-teacher found herself in difficulties in Vichy France in the spring of 1942. It was typical of the kind of close shave to which his readiness to be of service constantly exposed him and from which those near to him were frequently required to rescue him at the last moment.

Maria Van Kysselberghe provides a detailed account of the life of Gide when he wrote his last volume of his memoirs: "Et maintenant, il est capable d'une infatigable patience, d'une persévérance, d'une bonne plus importante que la chose la plus importante, plus précieuse que d'avoir raison." "Et maintenant, il est capable d'une infatigable patience, d'une persévérance, d'une bonne plus importante que la chose la plus importante, plus précieuse que d'avoir raison."

However, the Malraux of this world was always proved right, only in the short term. The outbreak of war dislodged Gide and his "petit Beckmann" from their perch in the Rue Vaneau and forced him to flee to southern France, where he found a normal surroundings, relatives and friends, and a sense of the end of an era. Gide gratefully accepted the hospitality of his friends, and here followed a three-year separation during which

divested himself of a supernumerary pair of underpants, clock, scarf and woolly hat. And repeatedly he creates disruption when, like a much-cosseted cat, he sets about choosing the spot for his afternoon nap.

It was Malraux, of course, who in his preface to the first instalment of these notebooks accused Gide and his circle of being in "la Vaneau" of living in splendid isolation from the course of contemporary history. Yet Gide never ceased to intervene on behalf of those caught up in the mesh of world affairs and it is ironic, near the start of the present volume, to find Malraux being raised star of a new generation, "un nommé Sartre", to whose short-story, "Le Mur", his own *Temps du mépris* is compared and judgment: "ce qu'écrivit Malraux n'a pas le sens de la langue." The most lasting values of literary style and personal friendship were what Gide and Malraux were dedicated to preserving. Some measure of this success is given by Gide's remark on being reunited with the Petite Dame after a brief separation: "Où, au milieu d'un monde où tout est mal, nous avons le bonheur de connaître des choses qui vont bien."

To some, no doubt, such a day-to-day account of an author's every word and deed over nearly a third of a century will appear close, particularly when it is duplicated by that author's own diary. This hopes that whereas the *Journal* reveals Gide's "attitude pensée, raffinée après coup", her own record will provide "le cheminement, en avant, en arrière, à droite, à gauche, de son esprit". The truth is less straightforward for Gide's indecisiveness and gradual working-out of a problem, so too Mme. Gide's notes sometimes reproduce only the net result of this process. *Journal* and *Les cahiers de la Petite Dame* complement one another endlessly. At one point, seeking to justify her extraordinary endeavour, Mme. Gide writes: "De quelle utilité pourraient être tes notes prises ainsi, sur le vif pour comprendre Rouvenau qu'on ne cesse d'écouter, d'interroger, d'analyser, d'apprécier." One awaits the concluding volume of this series with eager anticipation.

The best of company

By Douglas Johnson

CLAUDE MAURIAC:

Le temps immobile
Tome 3: Et comme l'espérance est violente
322pp. Paris: Grasset. 65fr.

Claude Mauriac seems to have been destined to become, if not a writer, at least the careful keeper of a journal. He has kept one, it seems, from his earliest years (in this volume he quotes from an entry dated March 12, 1925, when he must have been about ten, which Mauriac has published as a book already entitled "Ma vie"). But whereas many of those most astute and successful in recording their everyday activities and most intimate reflections owe it to a preoccupation with themselves, Mauriac belongs to another type of journal-compiler: the more self-effacing, who are observers and registrars most apt at writing down what they hear or read, and who tend to ignore what they themselves are creating or experiencing.

Le temps immobile is not an account of M Mauriac's novels, nor of his critical writings, and it has relatively little to say about his family. It covers the period from 1958 to 1975, and is concerned mainly with three men who played a dominant role in his life during those years, General de Gaulle, André Malraux and Michel Foucault, and the discussions and episodes which they inspired or originated.

Naturally, one other person is also constantly present, and that is the author's father, François Mauriac. Not only was Claude Mauriac dominated by his presence and his memory, he was often made to serve his father's needs. We are told, for example, how he was obliged to make a dangerous bicycle journey on the eve of the liberation of Paris, in order to collect one of his father's articles.

But it was because of François that Claude Mauriac has constantly been surrounded by the distinguished and famous, and it is this which has enabled him to write a journal which other people will want to read. There are always those who like to hear anecdotes, and all that M Mauriac has had to do is to record the stories which he heard in the course of the day. Of the occasion, for example, when de Gaulle was among those who were listening to General Giraud tell the story of how he escaped from the Germans in 1942. "And now," said de Gaulle, once Giraud had finished, "will you tell us how you came to be a prisoner?" (Malraux apparently did not believe that de Gaulle could have spoken so offensively). To this extent M Mauriac has published a book which is bound to be successful.

But it has two aspects which are unusual. The first is its variety. It begins with de Gaulle's return to power and the establishment of the Fifth Republic. M Mauriac wonders whether he is to be appointed to de Gaulle's staff, as he was in 1944. But the appointment does not materialize, and it is as a spectator only that he watches the new regime. National politics come to us via François Mauriac's relations with L'Express or through gossip.

In the second, longer half of this volume, M Mauriac describes a direct and active life in the politics of protest; the small intellectual group who form associations, hold meetings, pass resolutions, investigate injustices and combat authority. Here the concern is with the scandal of prison life, with the atrocities committed against Algerian immigrants, with the terrible housing conditions in certain parts of Paris, as well as with the larger injustices to be laid at the door of particular governments.

The Mauriac who patiently interviews Algerians in the hope of finding out the exact truth about some incident, and who spends so much of his time drafting statements which are ignored by most of the press, seems very different from the man

who hangs on to every reminiscence which the garrulous Malraux is prepared to proffer. Yet it is the same Mauriac and this gives some literary unity to the work. The Mauriac who is struck with wonderment that Malraux should ask him to compare his own recollections of de Gaulle with his, is much the same as the Mauriac who gets enormous satisfaction from the fact that he was present when Sartre met Foucault for the first time. The Mauriac who is fascinated by de Gaulle is the same as the Mauriac who is so fascinated by Foucault that he almost embarrasses him by his constant references to his "rire carnassier" and his "sourire ironique". This is a journal of particular interest and distinction.

Its second unusual aspect, however, is less satisfactory. M Mauriac claims to be preoccupied with the problem of time, a preoccupation which takes the form of interposing the record of events from one year to another, so that certain moments there is a deliberate confusion of narrative. Thus, when he leaves the airport Charles de Gaulle at Roissy, accompanied by Foucault, Régis Debray, Yves Montand and others, in order to fly to Barcelona and register his protest against certain death sentences passed by Franco's government, he conflates this with his journey across the fields of Roissy-en-France in 1944, reflects on the fact that the Spanish sky was where Malraux served as a fighter pilot, recalls his crossing of the frontier as recorded in his journal for 1933, tells himself that the airport is called Charles de Gaulle, and remembers his father's protest in 1953 against the then French government and its policies in Morocco.

The method is meant to be significant for the life, and to resemble artistically a montage, in which the observer becomes aware of intricacies that would otherwise be concealed. But it looks more like a device than a principle, and in spite of M Mauriac's insistence, one has the impression that the method is secondary to the matter.

Angst and the ad-man

By Patrick McCarthy

ARMAND SALACROU:

Les Amours
295pp. Paris: Gallimard.

The second volume of Armand Salacrou's memoirs describes the period from 1934 to 1940 when he wrote some of his best plays—*L'Inconnu d'Arras*, *La Terre est ronde* and *Histoire de rire*. He moved from his early Surrealist works to a witty, quick-moving style that masks a strain of despair. *L'Inconnu d'Arras* foreshadows the theme of Sartre's *Flies Clos*.

These were years of triumph and Salacrou moved easily in the theatrical and political worlds of Paris. This book contains a string of anecdotes: Alice Cocéa, the star of *Histoire de rire*, who lived amidst a whirlwind of lovers, one of whom clambered aboard her yacht in order to shoot himself before her eyes; Arletty who consorted with duchesses but spoke in the raucous working-class accent of the Paris suburbs; André Masson who did sets for Salacrou's plays and whose strange, haunted paintings are now being rediscovered; Alexis Leger (Saint-John Perse) who, as permanent secretary at the Quai d'Orsay, watched with absolute lucidity while the French armies fell apart in 1940; Pierre Laval whose demonic energy fascinated Salacrou: "I shuddered, still moved by the magnetism of this man. Like a woman being raped I had submitted to his charm and strength. Slowly and angrily I got a grip on myself."

But the most interesting character of all is Salacrou's businessman and artist, ensconced in his luxurious flat on the Avenue Foch and yet obsessed with his visions of death. The Surrealists had shown a flair for publicity and now Salacrou developed it further. He grasped intuitively the way that advertising works in a modern society. He conducted marketing surveys before the

term was invented. With jingles and captions he transformed his father's little stock of cough-medicines into a large pharmaceutical company. Salacrou had enormous creative ability. He designed a house for himself in the middle of the Normandy forest overlooking the Seine. It had glass walls and peacocks in the garden. One servant went mad with loneliness, another spent all day talking to the rears, there was a surrealist invasion of moles. But Salacrou continued to lavish money on what was really a work of imagination.

The centre-piece of this book is his affair with a young actress, Line. It started as a casual night in a hotel and turned into a violent passion. Salacrou was on the brink of giving up both his marriage and his business. Although he considered Line stupid and boring, he was consumed with jealousy: "An unexpected jealousy torments me! Jealousy of the past, the present, jealousy of all the time she spends away from me—this jealousy overwhelms me completely because I cannot possess her completely." He tortured Line with long interrogations, he broke up with her and he came back. As his long-suffering wife told him, he was determined to destroy himself. The bitter sense of failure that drives Ulysses to suicide in *L'Inconnu d'Arras* was present in Salacrou's life. Finally he realized that Line was a creature of his imagination and the drama ended.

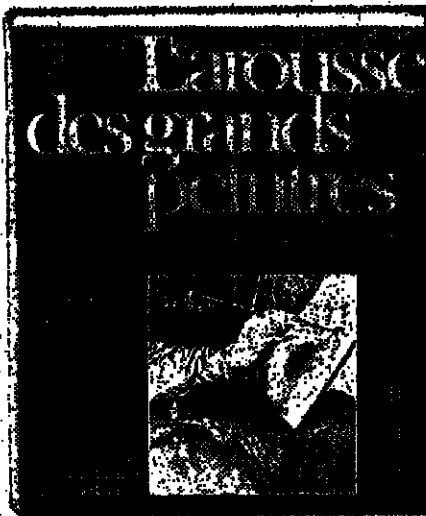
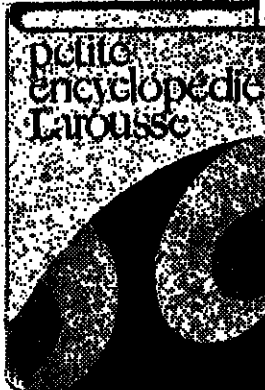
One has only one reservation about these memoirs: Salacrou is carefully selecting what he tells us. He complacently publishes the love letters he received from his adoring wife but he skips over the strong vein of ambition in his character—he was very peeved in 1939 when Gideaux was chosen ahead of him as Minister of Information. Still, his book flows well and he is a most intriguing man.

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The ladies of Lucknow

By E. T. Stokes

PAT BARR:
The Memsahibs
The Women of Victorian India
210pp. Secker and Warburg. £4.90.

The insularity of British culture may have been most evoked since Matthew Arnold's day by the spread of the English language, but its insular monolingualism has kept it highly insular. Hence it has to look for its exotic stimulus to the limited peripatetic of experience that it is condemned to absorb. It is condemned to narcissism. Difference has to be sought in likeness. The persistent interest of the British in their own past reflects less a scientific or intellectual curiosity than an impulse to round out the closed circle of their mental world.

In all this, India stands as an extreme term, a distorting mirror held up to nature that throws back images of the British character in its more extravagant and exaggerated shapes. Such notorious academic ruminations do not trouble Pat Barr: her art consists in skimming and not dipping below the surface. Lefty fastening on to the fashionable interests in Victorian and the Memsahibs, she presents in *The Memsahibs* an engaging set of vignettes depicting the European women of Victorian India in their heyday.

Much of her subject-matter has been worked over before, and the formula for success in the genre has long been established. In the 1950s, with the work of a Nadir Shah, Michael Edwards burst into the Indian historical kingdom, so jealously guarded by the academics, and carried off the peacock throne before their stupefied gaze. Mrs Barr freely acknowledges her debt to him. In

deed, Edwards's *Bound to Exile: The Victorians in India* (1961) has supplied much of her model and material. One lesson she has heeded in particular. Despite her wish to rescue women as a proper subject for historical study, she recognizes that to limit herself to describing the lives of ordinary Englishwomen—or rather Scotswomen—in India would soon lower her tone below that of a women's magazine. For the restrictions of social life, even when moderated by residence in presidency capitals like Calcutta or Bombay, condemned most women to an existence of wearisome triviality and ennui in the brief intervals between frequent child-bearing. While the details of Clementina Benthall's voyage out to Calcutta, or of Sarah Terry's housekeeping accounts and supervising the making of mango and pomegranate water-ices in her modest Bombay house supply the requisite dash of local colour, the lives of the illustrious obscure are not the stuff out of which successful books of this kind can be fabricated. Mrs Barr looks properly to the stir of great events and to women placed in exceptional circumstances or possessed of unusual talents.

To sustain the element of the exotic she rightly concentrates on the period—roughly 1840 to 1880—when European women began to live in India in significant numbers, but before the steam and railway had narrowed the psychological distance with Europe unduly. The first twenty years of this period coincided with the Sikh and Afghan wars and culminated in the Mutiny of 1857-58. Lady Sale's adventures in the Afghan passes in 1842, Honoria Lawrence sustaining Henry's herculean labours at Ferozepore, Katherine Bartum's fortitude at Lucknow in 1857 and Mrs Tytler amid the heroes of Delhi,



The Venetian
Nicola Manucci
taking the pulse of
an Indian patient:
he had a life of
fantastic escapades
in seventeenth-century India. After
running away to sea,
fighting as a
mercenary, and
installing an illegal
still, he established
a lucrative practice
in Agra as a doctor:
his first—and
successful—
treatment was an
enema of wild
cardamom and olive oil
administered
through a hookah
tube attached to a
cow's udder. One
of the many
illustrations in
Timothy Scovrin's
*The Oriental
Adventure:
Explorers of the
East* (240pp. Angus
and Robertson,
£6.50) which
describes a
variety of European
travellers who
penetrated into Asia
from the thirteenth
to the early
nineteenth century.

these and their like are given the lion's share of this short book. Their tale has largely been told before. So too has that of the women who obtained distinction by their pen rather than by enduring the peril of the sword. Emily Eden, Fanny Parkes, and Flora Annie Steel were women of character whose own words carry the reader easily along. Yet assembled in a portrait gallery of some sixty miniatures they catch the eye with renewed freshness—a talent. She writes with a practiced ease and the keen eye of the experienced traveller. The book is quickly culled, such as Emily

Eden's justificatory aphorism for Europeans ruling India from Simla: "Like me, we keep better here."

The dangers of any light soufflé of this kind are insubstantiality and inconsequence. When Percival Spoor helped pioneer the study of British social life in *The Nabobs* (1932), there was beneath his graphic art the more serious purpose of exploring changing European attitudes to India. Mrs Barr refuses to go so deep. Her aim is to instruct by keeping her reader's attention delicately utilitarian and amused. If she has a larger moral it resides in Aristotle's old-

fashioned saw that courage and all things lovely. Yet in one way she springs a trap. To the delight of "Anglo-Indian" women, she slurs so often on Kipling, did them a service in his *Plain Tales from the Hills*, she maintains, "because he is stereotyped and superficial version of the nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian woman, that being truly representative of the whole species." Yet the serious charge which Spoor and others brought against them—immorality of hill-station life with English women by the not and colour consciousness. Put to rest not contradict this but date it: the complex of European women in the shadows of European women, especially after 1857, each combination between the races at inevitably widened social segregation.

Furthermore, the deeper mine that went beyond the cover story of insecurity informing any capricious complex was more than an Anglo-Indian or colonial phenomenon and characterized Victorian Britain as a whole. The racial passion and unbridled lust for revenge that the Mutiny awoke among home-staying Britons (and even American like Emerson) sprang from deep psychological roots. The ideal act of horror at Cawnpore (the pur), when the Nana's minister ordered the British women and children to be thrown down the well, was magnified in imagination as a mass reversion to savagery, which the Victorian ideal of a sanctity of womanhood had been deliberately violated.

But it is not part of Mrs Barr's cinematograph technique to follow on matters of this kind. In fact, this is a pity. Her talent as a writer and her interesting foraging among the original materials in the India Office Library and the Centre of South Asian Studies in Cambridge suggest that she is capable of a more sustained and more study than this brief and light-hearted excursion through the past. Yet at the level at which she is aimed no one would deny that she has scored a sparkling success.

Cracking the genetic code

By Donald Fleming

ROBERT OLBY:
The Path to the Double Helix
510pp. Macmillan. £12.50.

ANNE SAYRE:
Rosalind Franklin and DNA
221pp. New York: W. W. Norton.
\$8.95.

Before its appearance, Robert Olby's book *The Path to the Double Helix* was widely heralded as Francis Crick's reply to J. D. Watson on the birth pangs of the double helix. Olby does indeed incorporate Crick's valuable reminiscences and reflections, entailing a fair number of quick but telling jabs at Watson; but the book is anything but a partisan plea. Olby's object is exactly the opposite—to do justice all round on a breathtaking scale. Apart from the predictable constellation of Watson and Crick, Erwin Chargaff, Linus Pauling, Maurice Wilkins, and Rosalind Franklin, no fewer than twenty-five other investigators stretching from the end of the nineteenth century into the 1950s are elevated to star billing in Olby's section titles. Crick in his justifiably laudatory introduction seems to be hinting that it is a bit much for him. But whatever doubts may be expressed about the particular not the general case, he has certainly written the right kind of book, with plenty of historical perspective on Watson and Crick's glittering achievement.

The structure of DNA could have been solved even if its function had remained as obscure as when it was discovered by the Swiss Friedrich Miescher in 1869. But in that event, the race for the double helix would not have been for the same stakes, and Watson and Crick probably would not have competed. They conceived of themselves as

cracking the structure of genes. A close link between DNA and genes was almost clinched by O. T. Avery of the Rockefeller Institute, with Colin MacLeod and Maclyn McCarty, in a bombshell of an article published in 1944. They showed that a highly purified DNA extract from one type of pneumococcus could effect the transformation of a markedly different type into the former. Doubts persisted about the possible role of a minute fraction of nucleoprotein still adhering to the DNA, but Alfred Hershey and Martha Chase banished these in 1952 by a virtually airtight demonstration that viral protein could be ruled out as participating in the infectivity of viruses, leaving the capacity to multiply in the host.

Probably the least cautious expositor of the wider implications of Avery's work was the Frenchman André Boivin, some of whose supporting researches could never be duplicated by others. If anything, Boivin's unbridled enthusiasm impeded a just evaluation of Avery's findings. Boivin did, however, make the fundamental contribution of demonstrating in 1948, with Roger Vendrely, that the DNA content of diploid (somatic) cells was twice that of haploid (germ) cells. As the cytologists had long ago shown that the formation of germ cells entailed halving the gene complement in preparation for fusing with a haploid cell from the other sex, thereby restoring the full complement, the Boivin-Vendrely "rule" was extraordinarily suggestive for the genetic functions of DNA. An equally revealing insight was afforded by Erwin Chargaff's demonstration in 1949 that different species had different ratios of one pair of nitrogenous bases in their DNA to the other pair.

The cytochemical indications of a

genetic role for DNA were piling up. They would never have become entirely persuasive unless accompanied by evidence that DNA was capable of encoding adequate instructions to specify the observed complexity of organisms and diversity of species. Here the underlying condition was met by the German chemist Hermann Staudinger's valiant struggle from the 1920s forward to gain acceptance for the idea of macromolecules—enormous by long polymers, classically exemplified in crystalline DNA (molecular weight according to species ranging from 10^6 to 10^9).

Though DNA might be a macromolecule of great length, its chemical constituents were known to be remarkably simple. DNA seemed to be a poverty-stricken molecule for weaving the rich tapestry of living things. Its credibility as the hereditary agent urgently required the conjuring away of this paradox. That was the principal service unwittingly performed by the great pioneer of quantum mechanics Erwin Schrödinger in his little book *What is Life?* of 1944. He said nothing whatever about DNA. He merely pointed out, by analogy to the Morse code, that by ringing the permutations upon a tiny chemical alphabet, composed into small groups, "an almost unlimited number of possible arrangements" could be generated. A remarkably economical "code-script" for genetics would suffice.

Watson read Schrödinger as an undergraduate and later said that this was what "polarized" him toward "finding the secret of the gene." This animus was reinforced by his subsequent contacts with the physicist-turned-biologist Max Delbrück, Delbrück specialized in the bacteriophages, bacteriophage viruses, and for a time felt the seductions of the theory that viruses were

"naked" genes and correspondingly more revealing for genetics. What he chiefly communicated to Watson and other phage geneticists was the sense that "some great revelation", some utterly dazzling illumination in biology, was impending in connection with genes, and more particularly their mode of replication. With this hazy but intoxicating vision, Delbrück mingled his own contempt for conventional biologists and biochemists as the least likely instruments of the biological revolution in the offing. His whole posture authorized Watson, whose scientific training was decidedly limited, to believe that somebody with enough audacity might score an unprecedented coup in elucidating the gene and leave the ostensible experts gasping in the rear.

This was a vague enough ambition to paralyse anybody who embraced it. Watson did not even begin to see his way to the goal till he heard a report at Naples in May 1951 by Maurice Wilkins, a member of J. T. Randall's team in biophysics at King's College London. The real excitement of Wilkins' presentation came at the end, when he showed a slide from a fairly good X-ray photograph of crystalline DNA and implied that here was the clue to the structure of genes. Once Watson had picked up the scent, he rapidly headed for the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge University and his totally unanticipated rendezvous with Francis Crick, whom nobody would have tagged as the man to help with this problem. Watson could never have solved it on his own, but he was the original bearer of the messianic enthusiasm about deciphering DNA that henceforth infected Crick as well.

Simply as a problem in stereochemistry, the structure of DNA

could have been tackled long ago. In fact, it was. Phoebus Levene at the Rockefeller Institute was at work on the structure of the nucleic acids from well before the First World War till his death in 1940. It was he who first conceived of a phosphate-sugar "backbone" for the nucleotides; and he who demonstrated that the sugar in thymus nucleic acid was deoxyribose, rather than ribose, hence the name DNA—deoxyribonucleic acid. Unfortunately, he added to these brilliant contributions the ill-fated and eventually ill-famed "tetranucleotide" hypothesis, according to which every DNA nucleotide contained equimolar proportions of the four nitrogenous bases adenine, guanine, cytosine, and thymine. One famous model of DNA had already foundered before Watson and Crick set to work.

In the period between Watson and Crick's first encounter in September 1951 and their solution of the problem in March 1953, two other structures were quickly shot down, their own of November 1951 and Linus Pauling's of February 1953, both of them triple helices with the phosphates at the core and the bases on the outside. Neither model stipulated any direct, let alone obligatory, relation between bases. The principal question for the history of biology was Watson and Crick, after fumbling badly, were enabled to arrive at the correct structure, a right-handed double helix incorporating the obligatorily paired bases adenine/thymine and cytosine/guanine at the core, with the phosphates on the outside. As Olby points out, the path that led to the answer for Watson and Crick was not the only conceivable one that might ultimately have led to the destination. It was the same path that would have had to be traversed by the only close contenders for the prize, Linus Pauling, Maurice Wilkins, and Rosalind Franklin, because each of them had helped to pave it.

The chief merit of Olby's book is to define more clearly than before the necessary and adequate conditions for following this path to a

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The primacy of the performer

By Geoffrey Axworthy

MARTIN BANHAM:
African Theatre Today
103pp. Pitman. £3.50 (paperback, £1.95).

ANTHONY GRAHAM-WHITE:
The Drama of Black Africa
220pp. Samuel French. £5.50.

ELDER DUDOSIMI JONES (Editor):
African Literature Today
No 8: Drama in Africa
152pp. Heinemann Educational. £3.60 (paperback, £1.80).

African Theatre Today is a well-organized and thoroughly readable introduction to the works of the principal published dramatists of West and East Africa, with a concise account of their cultural and theatrical backgrounds. Extensive quotation from the plays, clearly related to context, and the attractive format of the book, make it a pleasure to read. Olive Wake digests in a chapter the immense complexities of the theatre of French-speaking Africa. Martin Banham's account of the record of published plays does not tell the whole—or even the most important part—of the story of African theatre. "Those which are popular never get published and those which are published are never popular".

This point is also made by Mr. Banham, who starts with a detailed description of Nigeria's top professional entertainers—Hubert Ogunde, Duro Ladipo and the late Kola Ogunmola—where the text, even when available, gives only a faint impression of their mastery of integration of composing and performing skills. The theme is also developed most constructively at the end of J. C. de Graft's fascinating essay, "Koré in African Drama and Theatre", in which he asserts: "The greatest weakness of the emerging modern African theatre is, to me, not that it tries to imitate the European theatre—as some would have us believe—but that it lacks the element which is most abundant on the European stage: the convinced and convincing actor, the impersonator who comes to his art with a

single-minded purpose, concentration and discipline, like the Egyptian masqueraders and *Porrá* dancers of old. If we wish to quarrel with our modern African theatre, then let us direct our rage at its sloppy amateurism, its lack of discipline and the sense of purpose, its scramble for miserable crumbs of dollars from the tables of tour operators.

One important point that all three books tend to obscure (for instance, through book lists giving dates of publication rather than composition) is that the flow of dramatic writings of high literary quality in English has dried to a trickle in the past decade. One of the reasons for this is undoubtedly political disillusionment, the obbing of some powerful assertions—significantly from East African contributors—of the claims of the popular writer in the national languages. In his editorial preface, Professor Jones rightly emphasizes that the record of published plays does not tell the whole—or even the most important part—of the story of African theatre. "Those which are popular never get published and those which are published are never popular".

This quality is unfortunately lacking in Anthony Graham-White's *The Drama of Black Africa*. This is Africa worshipped at a distance. The author fell in love with his subject at a Soyinka rehearsed reading at the Royal Court Theatre, London, one Sunday night in 1959. Studies in African sociology at Harvard and drama at Stanford led, in 1969, to the doctoral thesis on which his book is based. Though it is patiently assembled, from a wide variety of sources of varying authority, a great deal of informa-

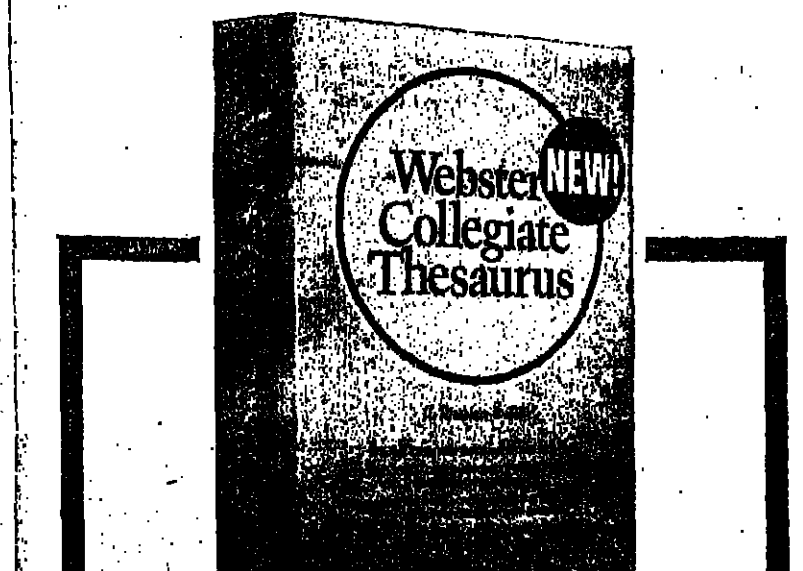
tion, it is undiscriminating and out-of-date. In *Drama in Africa* Elder Jones of Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, brings together a wide range of articles and reviews on African drama and theatre including South African and Arab drama. Viewing the collection as a whole one gets an encouraging sense that the discussion of African drama is widening at last to recognize the crucial importance, to the writer, of performance. Although the emphasis is still largely on the published play in English or French and on scholarly analyses such as "Language and Meaning in Soyinka's *The Road*" or "Language and Drama: Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*", some forceful assertions—significantly from East African contributors—of the claims of the popular writer in the national languages. In his editorial preface, Professor Jones rightly emphasizes that the record of published plays does not tell the whole—or even the most important part—of the story of African theatre. "Those which are popular never get published and those which are published are never popular".

There is a remarkable conversation between the latter and the author in which he ends by saying, "How can we look so far ahead as you do?—three hundred or four hundred years?" She had none of the kind, but he assumed that any surrender of control to the Africans before then was unthinkable. "How can we bind too much to a distant and incalculable future?" It was only just over thirty years away. With the settlers one never gets very far away from tennis and dancing.

While staying with the Governor I decided that I must go and see the Kamba tribe so I set off across the Ashi plains for Mwakos, the headquarters of the district. . . . I arrived to find my unknown host, the DC, was just setting out for tennis. He had never been warned of my arrival. However, when I explained my inability, he quickly found me shoes, a racket and I went and played too. Very excellent tennis it was, too, since one player was an Oxford blue.

And yet, in spite of the picture throughout the book of what might almost be called an endless rural Wimbledon, one constantly meets administrators who were not only utterly conscientious, but at times imaginative. In the similar book on southern Africa, *African Apprenticeship*, one reads of a magistrate in Natal. "We know the Zulu and no one else does. He is a fine unspooled creature in his natural state, very courteous and respectful to us, and we mean to keep him so. Therefore we shall not educate him. She did not meet anything quite as stubborn as this in East Africa. Some in South Africa will say now that this is why they will last for two or three hundred years and not for fifty. But perhaps the future historian will say that this explains why white rule in East Africa ended so peacefully and in South Africa so very differently. At any rate that future historian will find that this book gives him a most unusual insight into the East Africa of colonial days. And the present-day reader, interested in the Africa of today, will find the same; and also that the liveliness of the writing, being the scenes he is reading about before him in a very realistic way.

What the future historian is going to find in this book is an astonishing picture of the British administration and of the British settlers of the time, in spite of Colonial Office inquiries and White Paper promises about before him in a very realistic way.



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Seeing Alexander plain

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ARRIAN:
History of Alexander and India
Volume IV, 147-7 Professor Brunt's Translated and Edited by P. A. Brunt.
547pp. Harvard University Press/Heinemann. £2.95.

Arrian's *Anabasis* is, despite its limitations, our best source of knowledge about Alexander the Great. The new Loeb edition, by the Camden Professor of Ancient History at Oxford, of the *Anabasis* and *Indica* (parallel text and translation, textual and historical footnotes, introduction, and fifteen appendixes) replaces that by Iliff Robson (1929), long a stumbling-block to an understanding of the Greek, and historically very meagre. No historian of footnotes of any value. Robson's edition is seriously outdated: his innocent remark that "the facts of Arrian's life are simple" is hardly an acceptable statement of the position reached by modern scholarship. New inscriptions have thrown light on Arrian's distinguished public career in the Roman Empire of the second century AD, suggesting fresh attempts to relate the man's life to his work. That relation remains obscure, less so than in the case of Thucydides or Tacitus. But unlike the historical work of the last two named, Arrian's *Anabasis* is not to be regarded as the mature product of a profound political intelligence: "no historian," as Professor Brunt's provisional verdict on Arrian, though he gives him a *ben* for honesty. Volume 2 of the present edition, containing Books V-VII of the *Anabasis*, and the *Indica*, will, we are told, give Professor Brunt's final views on among other matters, Arrian's use of his sources and will presumably amplify the conclusion given here.

This new Arrian is a major and welcome event in Alexander scholarship. Professor Brunt has done a necessary job splendidly. The first advance is that very many material errors have been eliminated in the translation. Some had been weeded out in successive reprints: thus at I, 18, 2 one of Robson's original howlers had been to make some Greek cities of Asia Minor continue paying to Alexander the tribute they had previously paid to Persia. Actually the Greek means that Alexander remitted this tribute. Professor Brunt has recast the sentence, which at last accurately represents the Greek. It would be easy but pointless to list other significant improvements. Even trivial mistakes have been removed, like the in-promptu brick wall put up by the hapless at Halicarnassus, which must have curved inward, not out-

ward, from the breach made by the Macedonians. It must be said that some of Professor Brunt's improvements have been made at the expense of good English style. A single sentence will illustrate both the important merits and the minor shortcomings of the new translation. At IV, 147, 7 Professor Brunt's "I infer" is right where Robson's "I gather" was at best misleading. But, in the same sentence, Professor Brunt's "Callisthenes' detractors were readily believed that it is simply not English. We need something like 'Callisthenes' detractors were readily believed when they suggested that . . .".

In the admirable introduction and appendixes, some of Professor Brunt's most clear and helpful pages are on the Macedonian army. Here incautious readers may be unduly impressed by the sole appearance of his arithmetic. An example: one ingenious result of his 1963 study, "Alexander's Macedonian Cavalry," taken over here, was to get rid of the large discrepancy between Callisthenes' figures for Alexander's foot-soldiers (40,000) and those given by Ptolemy and Aristobolus (30,000). Professor Brunt suggests that the advance force of 10,000 sent to Asia by Philip II in 336, and commanded by Parmenio and Atinaus, had stayed in Asia, and that the 40,000 figure excluded these men from while others included them in their totals. But how reliable is that all-important figure of 10,000? It rests on the impossibly weak authority of Polyneus (in 336, certainly before 334) Parmenio and 10,000 men were worsted by 4,000 Persians under their general Memnon. Ten thousand, says Professor Brunt, is "no doubt a round figure". It would be better to say it is so doubtful a round figure (see below). But first, there is the awkward fact that in Polyneus's stratagem, the Macedonian force is very substantially reduced (many killed, many captured, the rest got away, says Polyneus). How then can the story be used as evidence for the numbers of Macedonians in Asia at the later date of 334? We may choose not to believe that the great Parmenio was outgeneralled in the way Polyneus describes. But if so, our doubly sure strike has the credit of the story as a whole, figures included. But the "stratagem" sounds to me like a pretty small-scale affair, with which Polyneus's 10,000 is out of all keeping. To get 4,000 on the Persian side looks circumstantial enough; but the Macedonian total of 10,000 was the greatest number expressible by a single Greek word (*Myrioi*: compare our "myriad").

Polyneus, if he is worth anything, merely shows that in one minor engagement in a 336 force of Macedonians was unexpectedly and badly mauled by a smaller force of Persians. After that we may plausibly assume with Beloch that the major institutions of family, succession and property law in mid-first-century Rome. Only the chapter "Private Law and Legal Life" is a bit of a misnomer, having been dispensed with; it is not irrelevant but, to this reader, neither was it necessary.

Rightly rejecting rash analogizing from other ancient legal systems of the Mediterranean and Middle East, Professor Watson has confined himself to material relevant to Rome. I have never been dissatisfied from the author's conclusions, but on this occasion, would accept, apart from the argument that the defendant spoke first in the *legis actio per sacramentum* in all Roman law, Watson's conclusions on marriage, *potes*, and other institutions of which he treats.

His arguments are impressive and, as always, ingenious; he is refreshingly ready to abandon positions previously held; he accepts polemical. His style is clear and plain, his learning immense—as the numerous and detailed footnotes demonstrate—and he has produced a book to this reader his best. I think that can and should be not only a pleasure to read, but a pleasure to read. (Only three minor points were noted: page 108, line 12, note 10, page 109, line 12, note 10, page 109, line 12, note 10.)

On this rather unpromising basis and with the aid of results attained in other fields of research into ancient Roman culture, Professor Watson has produced in sixteen volumes, but comprehensive chapters, a credible and coherent reconstruction

of the Roman legal system. The appendixes cover a great deal of ground. On a number of points, judgment is reserved. Thus in Volume 2, the discussion of the sources will include an analysis of the speeches in Arrian. This is anticipated in the present volume, where it is pointed out first, that Arrian himself, in the last part of the *Anabasis*, accepts the fact (the fact, not the truth) of Alexander's claim to divine birth, and secondly, that by this acceptance Arrian is plied to a statement in a speech which he puts into Alexander's mouth, to the effect that Philip was regarded by Alexander as his father. From this unresolved and unnoticed contradiction the strange conclusion is reached that, in the speech, Arrian was "using material from one of his main sources" (Ptolemy and Aristobolus). But Arrian, in the passage where he speaks in his own person, proceeds to suggest that the claim to divine parentage was a "stratagem" designed for non-Macedonian consumption (*es tunc hypokekous*). Similarly, when rebellious Macedonians are being addressed (in the speech mentioned above) Alexander is naturally portrayed as stressing Philip's achievements, "aphorizing naturally as calling him 'my father'". Surely nothing follows, from this transparent artifice, about Arrian's use, in freely invented speeches, of unacknowledged "main sources" material. Incidentally, Professor Brunt's argument (any unnoticed inconsistency between a given passage and a judgment of

Arrian's own, means that the passage is from a "main source") can be used to "prove" that IV, 7, 1 mentions Alexander's "stratagem" as a "stratagem", since it is brought to an end, as the *Tabulae* absurdum, since here again Arrian speaks with his own voice. Again, it is rather odd that Professor Brunt seems concerned to deny a proposition which is generally believed, on the basis of Arrian's own clear statement of his practice, namely that the two "main sources" of the *Anabasis* were Ptolemy, rather than Aristobolus, was the "preferred source". Odd, because apparently inconsistent with his own footnote to the text, where it is shown that on at least three, perhaps four, identifiable occasions, Ptolemy, rather than Aristobolus, is "silently" preferred; and there are as a matter of fact several further instances in the books not yet translated.

Finally, it is only by taking the lowest possible view of Arrian's powers of collation that his version of the siege of Gaza can be regarded as a pair of clumsy doubles. This theory rests on no better evidence than Arrian's statement that two lots of siege engines were used, one brought up later; and why not? We are not yet told how so crass a doublet (much worse than the other three of which Arrian stands convicted in the footnotes to the present edition) should affect our judgment of him as a "simple honest soul". Nobody uses such favorable language about Diodorus, whose incompetence is most clearly shown by his perpetration of doublets as bad as that here laid at Arrian's door.

The may be that of Waller's *Diodorus Book XVII* (Loeb), with few changes. The mispelling "Hellenismus" is not corrected. More serious, the labelling of Coele of Hollow Syria is incorrect, on the new view (Bosworth, *Classical Quarterly*, 1974, invariably mis-cited as 1975) adopted by Professor Brunt in his footnotes, according to which this term is used by Arrian to denote the northern strip.

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The well-tempered bottle

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HARRY PARTCH :
Genesis of a Music
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517pp. New York : Da Capo, \$18.

It is time to come to terms with Harry Partch. If there is a place in our musical affections for Charles Ives and John Cage, there is also room for the American craftsman in sound whose work enacts the complicated transition between the proud, European challenges of isolation of Ives and the more urbane subversion of traditional Western attitudes practised by the author of *Silence*. The European commentator's difficulty with a composer like Partch is how to find something positive to say about a music that is most striking in terms of its shortcomings. One admires the vision, but is disenchanted by the vision; is moved by the dogged Protestant determination to build a new order from scratch, and then dismayed by the indifference, quality, even tawdriness, of what is produced; finally one respects the categorical ingenuity of the theory, while deploring the self-imposed moral and aesthetic limitations of the artistic process thereby articulated.

Partch will be remembered for *Genesis of a Music*, if for nothing else. First published in 1947, this substantial digest of personal, imperative and homely advice represented perhaps the most insistent and thoroughgoing prescription for an alternative musical culture available at the time. That, of course, was a time when Western music as a whole was gearing itself to make a fresh start and looking to the United States for a lead. Partch appeared to offer what was needed: a programme for a new music which combined the most advanced scientific knowledge of music and musical perception with the practical flair necessary to translate that knowledge into sound. He had not only read about the many different musical modes which obtain in various parts of the world, comparing them and considering their mathematical relationships, but had also shown the initiative and practical skill to construct instruments by which they could be heard. Such an example was refreshing and necessary.

It should be said that the book has survived the passage of time with much of its idealism intact. Instrument building is a flourishing part of present-day life, and we have still to examine alternatives to equal temperament along the lines Partch proposes. Much still remains to be done, also, in developing the theme of pan-nationalism which his wide-ranging musical curiosity evoked. But by and large the appeal of *Genesis of a Music* now resides in its forthright summary of discernible national priorities. What once seemed to be individual weaknesses today appear to typify American musical culture in general.

At the time of its first publication, recordings of Partch's music were very hard to come by. It was easy to believe, judging from the author's vigorous prose style, that the composer was equally strong and innovative in his musical ideas. Now we have fairly easy access to the many recordings of which there have been, recorded coincidentally, a large number.

It is over that the book is a little dated, but it is a considerable margin. The discrepancy between levels of verbal and musical articulation is an American characteristic. One has only to compare, for instance, the music of a Varèse, a continental European, with the music of a Varèse, an American, to see the difference. With the kind of music writing that came at the time by native composers of similar aspiration, to appreciate the value of a cultural tradition in the perception and construction of new musical relationships, as Varèse senses not only the monumental grandeur, the pace and industry of urban life as well as the remote vastnesses of the American landscape, but one also apprehends a physical presence, a controlling intelligence inhabiting the sequential processes from which the composer takes much of his inspiration.

Radical American music of the time conspicuously fails to realize that grandeur, that controlling vigour.

It sounds timid, naively absorbed with number patterns and sound effects of a primitive kind, repetitive and non-developing, and limited in expression to those sensations obtained by instrumental juxtaposition. One is aware of mechanical, austere figurations, for instance in the early keyboard studies of Henry Cowell, but at the same time one is struck by the composer's apparent unwillingness to do anything more than listen in wonder and amazement to the simple process he has set in motion.

In the music of Partch, too, the proud European listener will be hard put to discover active transition: it is as though the creative act consisted of decisions made preparatory to intonation. This sentiment is reinforced for us nowadays by computer music that this is precisely how a certain kind of American composer does think. It would perhaps be a mistake to stigmatize a characteristic emotional detachment from sound patterns which seem to be of traditional, but, as unrefined diffidence, as that effect, may indeed be a sign of indecision. But the major coincides, we should remember, with the development in a war-debilitated Europe of what could also be called an aesthetic of fatalism, that is to say, neoclassicism.

This absence of rhetoric is reflected in Partch's instrumentation, which, as one would expect of a follower of Helmholtz, consists almost entirely of keyboards. Varèse also composed for large percussion ensembles, but he defied equal temperament and tempered pitch instruments such as the piano. There is a connection, it seems to me, between Varèse's mistrust of intellectual distinctions and the forcefulness of his music. Key-

boards appear to offer what was needed: a programme for a new music which combined the most advanced scientific knowledge of music and musical perception with the practical flair necessary to translate that knowledge into sound. He had not only read about the many different musical modes which obtain in various parts of the world, comparing them and considering their mathematical relationships, but had also shown the initiative and practical skill to construct instruments by which they could be heard. Such an example was refreshing and necessary.

His music demonstrates the distinctions he values without trying, or as it appears, to give those distinctions the consequence (in the sense of obligation to the listener to apprehend not only his pitch distinctions, but the value the con-

Four's company

By Denis Matthews

BASIL LAM :
Beethoven String Quartets
Volume 1: 58pp.
Volume 2: 72pp.

These two BBC Music Guides on the Beethoven quartets will be welcomed by collectors of this useful series and by admirers of Basil Lam's. Half a century ago Samuel Langford, that elderly Englishman, was so moved by the late quartets that he wrote: "It is something to beethoven, the same race of beings, complete cycle more readily available on records and radio, many music-lovers will echo his sentiments. Even Stravinsky, far from a 'Cossack' Beethoven, described the quartets as 'the most perfect of all music'. Yet even in this light the early opus 18 set requires no apology, a point made by Basil Lam in the first of his two volumes. The second volume, the unique and hurried progression of Beethoven's

genius. He then resumes discussion with opus 95 in F minor, contrasting its dramatic compression with the harmonic amplitude of the preceding ones. Sixteen years later, after the more profound 'amplitude' of the other late works, Beethoven progressed in style and conclusion to opus 135, in which the most subtle, almost unrecognizable, but still vigorous, intensity of portentiousness, a recovery of the true Mozartian tradition.

Within the scope of the Guides series Mr Lam throws much new light on the subject, striking a good balance between background information and the music itself. The layman seeking introduction to the works and without scores for reference may find himself flooded by some of the technical matter involving form and tonality, but there is compensation in the author's immense enthusiasm and desire to communicate. The many examples make some valid cross-references to other works, and Mr Lam's fluent manner takes in literary parallels as a matter of course. As a bonus the first volume also comments in some detail on Beethoven's chamber music for strings: the String Trio, which precedes the first quartet, and the one String Quartet opus 29.

Harry Partch's *Zygon-Xyl* (1963), the Greek syllables referring to its vital elements—*xylo* (wood) and *zygon* (yoke). The inventor says that if he had been a third Greek syllable denoting hubcaps, "it would probably have been added". He had to make do with calling the 1952 and 1953 hubcaps *Zeta* and *Chi*, and the aluminium kettle-top, *Omega*.

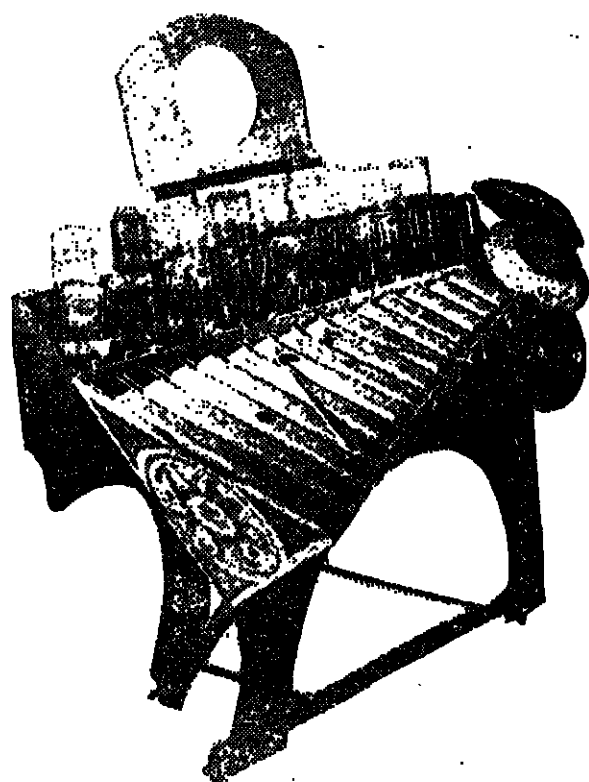
Partch attaches to them as well. One registers the author's enthusiasm in the written word, for such theoretical marvels as Octonality, Uttonality (harmonically versus subharmonically derived intervals: O is non-U, though superior, and both are difficult for a layman to identify), and the 31-tone scale; in the music, however, the enthusiasm and the distinctions vanish away.

The contradictions persist in other dimensions. What are we to make of a musician who has a violin neck put together a new instrument from a violin body and a cello neck and fingerboard, and who then proceeds to hammer coloured tacks into the fingerboard to indicate different pitch ratios? What do we make of the person whose hand-crafted instruments are proudly advertised as 'unmistakably mass-production aesthetic' (Kitharas I and II look remarkably like Daleks, and much of Partch's joinery is clearly held together by screws.) Perhaps the answer is that, in common with his French counterparts Lasry and Bacher (whose constructions of glass and metal, and inflatable plastic resonators are as irrevocably of the 1950s as a Calder mobile), Partch regarded his instruments as oracles of a new age.

Certainly a strong affection of ritual invests much of his composition, as also with the middle-period Cage; the role of the performer-composer comes to consist in releasing, rather than actively manipulating, instrumental pronouncements: music somewhat in the manner of a press statement (or Cabinet leak). The notion that new

inspiration imply new musical perceptions is all very well, as long as we do not forget that it takes practice and time to discover what these perceptions are.

Partch's inconsistencies are such, and his musical performance so uncertain, that one is bound to take note of them. That his mistakes now appear characteristic of a whole new generation of American musicianship is interesting and important, certainly, but cannot make us hear them as better music. Nevertheless, there is a substance in the person, the music and the philosophy, which deserves consideration in a wider historical context. The promise of *Genesis of a Music* has to that extent been fulfilled.



The founding fathers

By William St. Clair

RICHARD CLOGG (Editor):
The Movement for Greek
Independence 1770-1821
232pp. Macmillan, £10.

DAVID HOWARTH:
The Greek Adventure
253pp. Collins, £4.50.

The Greeks were the first people to establish themselves as a modern nation-state by violent revolution, and the more that is learnt about the independence movement in the years before the outbreak in 1821, the more remarkable their success appears to be. The Movement for Greek Independence consists of a selection from contemporary documents aimed at illustrating the social structure of the country in the pre-revolutionary period and the diversity of attitudes and ideas which contributed to the revolutionary ideology—official documents of the Ottoman government, proclamations of the Church authorities, observations by Western travellers, political pamphlets by Greek intellectuals living abroad, popular ballads and satires, and many others of great interest and variety.

After reading the documents and Richard Clogg's perceptive introduction, one is left wondering who were the nationalists? Certainly not the Phanariotes, the educated Greeks of Constantinople, who saw themselves as the heirs of the Byzantine tradition with the prospect of growing wealth and influence within the framework of the Ottoman system. Nor the leaders of the Church, who consistently discouraged all manifestations of dissent or protest right up until 1821 and beyond. Count Capodistrias, the one man of Greek origin who had a position of great influence in Europe, deliberately (and sin-

cerely it would appear) disowned all attempts to involve him in the preparations for revolt, urging the Greeks to put their trust in God and Education. The Greek landowners were more Ottoman than the Turks; and as for the Klephts in the hills who played such a large part in the war itself when it came, although their banditry undoubtedly contained a large element of social protest, there was, as Mr Clogg says, little that could be considered as explicitly nationalist in their actions. The collection brings out strongly the extent to which the ideas which provided the rationale for the revolution (and later the modern Greek national myths) were derived from the European Enlightenment, the slogans of the American and French revolutions, and the European classical and philhellenic tradition. The Greeks did the fighting, but it was foreigners who supplied the justifications.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem warns his flock in 1798 to be content with their lot, to render unto Caesar (the sultan), and not to be deceived by that foreign invention, liberty, which the Devil himself "seeing that this our Orthodox faith flourishes in this powerful empire, in his envy and shame, he has summoned in desperation all the spirits of evil to help devise this new and ingenious trap so that in the end even good Christians may finally fall into it and be eternally tormented with him".

The Frenchman Firmin Didot records his success in persuading the schoolboys at Aivalik to give up their Christian names in favour of ancient names (Demetrios becomes Theonistocles, Hilarion becomes Xenophon, Ioannes becomes Pericles) and to promise to speak only ancient Greek on penalty of having to recite publicly a page of Homer. By contrast, the old Klepht Colocotronis, who fought the Turks for years before the revolution, recalls how, if ever one of their band was wounded in a skirmish, the others would all kiss

him and then cut off his head to prevent it falling into the hands of the Turks.

Mr Clogg's collection is full of such memorable episodes and anecdotes, which make their points more vividly than any amount of undiluted theoretical glossing. As a selection of source material it is well chosen, and (in so far as is possible in such a compass) fairly representative. All the documents are too literally translated into crib English, there is a useful glossary, and a map. The book is apparently intended as an aid to the teaching of modern Greek history to undergraduates who have no knowledge of the language. To them it will be indispensable, but I am uneasy about whether a sense of the complexity and uncertainty of the past can successfully be conveyed by this method, since such pupils will have very little other primary material to draw on.

David Howarth's book is a retelling of some of the main episodes of the Greek War of Independence with particular emphasis on the role of the Philhellenes and the operations at sea. It is interspersed with a few stories of the author's own mild experiences in Greece: for example, putting in to Missolonghi whilst yacht. It is attractively produced, with some interesting illustrations, but the writing is somewhat flat for

Life at close range

By Roderick Beaton

GEORGE SEFERIS:
Meres-B
24 August 1931-12 February 1934
141pp. Athens: Ikaros.

The third volume of George Seferis's diaries to be published (the second chronologically) covers the period of the poet's service in the Greek consulate in London. Although a civil servant for most of his working life (and apparently highly regarded in professional circles—he returned to London in the 1960s as Greek ambassador) Seferis drew a firm line between his obligations as a diplomat and his private life. He deliberately emphasized dichotomy in his character (which, as he tells us in *Manuscript, Sept. '41*, goes back to early childhood) perhaps explains the emphasis in his poems on the "secret life", the hidden "other world", which can be glimpsed but not attained by those who have compromised their inner selves in conformity with the demands of modern urban life.

Seferis the poet was keenly aware of this compromise in himself, and his natural fastidiousness drove him in his private moments, into a state of loneliness which is probably exaggerated in the diaries. Quite frankly, he tells us, he is bored. A large part of the diaries is made up of excerpts from correspondence, in which he reiterates his desperate need for companionship, his circle of acquaintance at the Consulate, he complains, provides no access to the intellectual world of London.

By comparison with Seferis's poetry and even the experimental novel, *Six Nights on the Acropolis* (Ext. *Mythos alla Akropolis*), it must be admitted that the diaries make disappointing reading. There is too much self-absorption, and the capacity, which Seferis acknowledges in himself, for dwelling on the most trivial details and generalizations from them, becomes tiresome after a while. In a prefatory note, D. N. Maronitis, who edited the text with the help of the poet's widow, explains that material has been omitted which shows Seferis's "confessed predilection for publicizing his personal life with an objective interest". This is disturbing, because much of the poet's self-examination which has been included is repetitive and has, at best, marginal "objective interest", while the almost total lack of reflection on his private life in the diaries may reflect editorial reluctance rather than Seferis's own.

Although lacking the concentration and incisiveness which are characteristic of Seferis's published poetry, the entries do provide an

interesting backcloth to the poems themselves. We learn of the laborious process of writing and careful rewriting which produced "Stevens" (The Cistern) and the Stratis Thalosinos poems, and the continual doubts with which Seferis was beset while working on them; in particular his disappointment with and final contempt for the Greek literary scene. Many of the entries record detailed and lively impressions of classical concerts, such as the virtuosic description of Ravel conducting, "like a fox making a grab inside the hen run"; and as early as 1931 he records an "idea for a piece of music, 'The Watch and the Expedition of the Argonauts', which contains in musical terms the germ of the idea which four years later became the poem sequence 'Mythistorama'.

Many of his comments on music are revealing—the more so perhaps for his admitted lack of a musical education. Stravinsky (later a friend) he admired above all other contemporary composers, otherwise his preference was for the French and Wagner, Richard Strauss and Wolf on the grounds that the Germans "never managed to forget Gretchen".

Although both the diary entries for these years and the poems Seferis was writing at the time reflect an uncertainty of approach and considerable personal turmoil, Seferis had already worked out the germ of the idea which four years later became the poem sequence "Mythistorama".

There are people who "consider" that a poet has imagination. . . . The truth is that a poet reproduces life from closer range than other people see it. Such close range, that the object reproduced (its physical appearance) is dissolved. Perhaps that is why other people do not understand.

Not that Seferis's poetry is exceptionally analytical, rather he "succeeded finally in reconciling those factual observation of the 'trivial detail' with a whole mythical fabric in which every physical fact is given genuine significance. But Seferis at the beginning of 1934, when he left London, was only just reaching that stage. He had already begun, is not even mentioned in the scanty entries for 1933 and the first two months of 1934. Something of the mature Seferis of the exile who no longer pines for his native land but has grasped its potential value to him, can be heard in his impressions of London shortly before leaving:

Place without gods; the only god is fear. But no one seems afraid; you recognize that god by the marks he has left on them; how to love this country? It is formless, but sometimes it becomes music—music of bulk, of power, of building workers and nurses; the river has the melody line.

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The third development was the evolution of county administration which in many ways forms the dominant theme of the book.

All the volumes range over a wide spectrum of history, from the late Middle Ages to the present day, as they deal with the history of both north and south Netherlands and with their overseas colonies. The latest volume, for example, includes seven articles on representative democracy in medieval Zealand, on the class-consciousness of the merchants of sixteenth-century Antwerp, on the use of quantitative methods in Dutch historiography of the eighteenth century, on the Dutch East India Company, on the Dutch colonial empire, and on the Dutch colonial economy.

plains that the volume contains a short history of the work of Low Countries history publishing. The "surveys", which appeared regularly since Volume 6, are masterpieces of clear, concise scholarship. Enough is written about various items to indicate their importance, and what they do not cover, and some of the findings are set out for the benefit of readers without a knowledge of Dutch. And even those who can read the material for themselves will find that the surveys save them a lot of time and effort. The single researchers, dependent on the scattered sources of British libraries, will be able to trace Dutch collector's and reader's of the single Dutch century's and volumes. The volume contains some of the best ever written, and some of the best of evidence it has become indispensable to Dutch historians and students in all parts of the English speaking world.

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All this makes the *Protagoras* dialogue of prime importance to the student of ancient philosophy or anyone who needs to find out about Socrates. C. C. W. Taylor's new translation and commentary in the Clarendon Plato series is much to be welcomed as a valuable guide.

many readers that there can be such a thing as a behaviourally based mentalism. It is good to have the case for this approach to the study of language so well argued.

There are certain aspects of Professor Chomsky's behaviourism which are, however, far from clear. Given that the principal question to which he addresses himself is how we could discover, on the basis of observable evidence, that such-and-such a tribe of human or non-human creatures has a language (this question being construed as being equivalent to the question "what would we call a behavioural system should it be counted as a language"), it is curious that the relationship between the behavioural data and what is to be discovered about the language system is never made clear. Language, we are told in the preface, is essentially a matter of systematic communicative behaviour.¹ What is to be discovered about language, then, is whether there is any difference intended between a behavioural system and systematic behaviour: between competence and performance (Chomsky's distinction between *la parole* in which it is manifest (Saussure). Nor are we told what difference there might be between having, or using, a language (*l'incapacité de parler*); and the very first page Professor Bennett moves from the one mode of expression to the other, and back, without warning. Why call these two distinct functions of this kind are "nuances"; and on several occasions he says that he is prepared to discount nuances and shades of difference, which are thought to be of some significance. The fact remains that in view of his failure to draw the *langue/parole* distinction or the *langue/language* distinction, it is not altogether clear what Professor Bennett means when he uses the terms "language" and "system".

Unlike Chomsky (the only linguist of whose work he refers), but like many or most other linguists and philosophers, Professor

for the student reading through the dialogue. The translation is smooth and accurate, the commentary a careful account of the complexities of a difficult set of arguments.

No startling new interpretations are suggested, and some recent unorthodox ones are rejected, most notably, Gregory Vlastos's claim that Socrates does not really argue for the thesis that all the virtues are one thing, knowledge, only for the less radical proposition that wisdom is the chief of the virtues. It mutually imply one another. Other points of interest include the use Mr Taylor makes of Protagoras's long speech early in the dialogue about a minimal shared morality, considered now in the current conclusion, on the basis of which he attributes to Protagoras a fundamental ethical objectivism tempering the relativism which is less more commonly attested doctrine. And Mr Taylor lends his support to a new view of the curriculum that whatever may be the case in other dialogues, Socrates in the *Protagoras* shares the hedonistic belief of the common man that what is good is to be measured in terms of pleasure and pain, the overall predominance of pleasure over pain in a man's life; for it is on the assumption that this is so that Socrates refutes the common man's belief that through weakness of his people sometimes do what they know to be bad and establish his paradox that no one does wrong willingly.

On these and other points whether one is convinced by his interpretation or not, there is much to be learnt from Mr Taylor's contributions to the continuing debates over the many historical and philosophical questions raised by this dialogue. In general, he has a sure touch with the textual detail of which sound interpretation must be based, and can be relied upon to raise the logically necessary questions, leading of an argument which does not hesitate to accuse Socrates of invalid reasoning where this is appropriate. Comparable treatment has not been accorded in the commentary to the *Protagoras* by any of Taylor's commentators takes it as a whole, and is worthily in the series.

Deenott makes the view that the structure of any language is determined by its primary communicative functions: (i) that of informing; (ii) that of enjoining; (iii) that of expressing attitudes, emotions and injunctions. He then adopts, in more or less its original formulation, H. P. Grice's analysis according to which: (a) the meaningfulness of an utterance is derivable from what an utterer (*U*) means by producing (or performing) *X*; and (b) *U*'s meaning something by what he does or says involves *U*'s intending that an effect in his audience or addressee (*A*) by means of *A*'s recognition of *U*'s intention. Some of the revisions that have been proposed in the past are rejected by Professor Bennet on the grounds that they obliterate the crucial distinction between statements and injunctions: that the former involve propositional attitudes (the belief that *p*), whereas the latter involve *U*'s intention to get *A* to do something. It is a further aspect of the basic distinction that the author emphasises that he should wish to preserve this distinction rather than give logical priority to the making of statements and the production of propositional attitudes. It is in this connection that on this point. Indeed, the central chapters of the book, for which the earlier chapters on teleology, belief, etc. and intention serve as a prolegomena, are devoted to the contribution to philosophical semantics. So, too, is chapter seven, in which Professor Bennett combines David Lewis's theory of conventionalism with Grice's theory of communication. The language might have developed out of intentional communicative behaviour that would not describe as linguistic.

from one or two necessary external signs, syntactically isomorphic with the formal language of quantification (in parenthesis-free notation). He makes it clear that it is no casual hypothesis to throw any light upon "the structures of any actual natural language". It is none the less regrettable that he did not at this point draw upon some of the ideas that Linguistics and Semantics have put forward recently about the ontogenetic (and perhaps phylogenetic) development of language. It is also regrettable that more is not said, in the final chapter, on such topics as the semiotic shift from natural to semantic and natural languages, the more as "the book is intended", as you are told in the blurb, "primarily for philosophers but also for those specialists in Linguistics, psychology, artificial intelligence, mass communication in recent years converged".

What Professor Benveniste has said is interesting enough. But it is somewhat surprising that he has parted from a discernible influence from etymology and biology, on the one hand, and from Chomskyan linguistics on the other. It is entirely philosophical. Linguistics, psychology and biology with their sciences have some background in the philosophy of language will not find the book easy to read; and they will have to draw their own conclusions as to whether the points that Professor Benvenet makes are relevant to their present concerns or not. Provided that they have the background, or alternatively are prepared to follow up the references given in the select bibliography, they will find the book well worth reading.

Two volumes of *The Aristotelian Society* have just appeared: Volume LX XVI in the New Series of Proceedings (306pp, £6), which contains the proceedings of the 1975-76 meetings, during 1975-76; and 8th Lamentary Volume L (269pp, £4) which prints the papers read at a symposium, held jointly by the Aristotelian Society and the Modern Association at Oxford, in July, this year. Both books are published in Salisbury by Cambridge University Press.

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There are two Deputy Directors. This post is primarily concerned with resource control and performance review, with a special emphasis on co-ordination of the Headquarters team of specialists—a multi-disciplinary team with responsibility for research and planning and the control of all the Department's resources, bibliographical, financial and human. The successful candidate will also be required to make a substantial contribution to the Department's research and planning programme, with the assistance of the Development Officer.

Applications for this post are invited from Chartered Librarians with substantial experience in a major library or library system and a proven record in the management of resources in a library context.

Application forms and further particulars are available from:

The Principal Personnel Officer, Cheshire County Council, County Hall, Chester CH1 1BF.

Closing date: 6th October.

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET LIBRARY SERVICES

LIBRARIAN IN CHARGE GRAHAM PARK LIBRARY

AP £3,525 to £4,085 plus £312 supplement plus 2288 London Weighting

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians with some experience in library management to be in charge of a modern purpose built library, opened in 1976.

Application forms and further details from Borough Librarian, Ravensfield House, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BE.

Closing date October 1, 1976.

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL County Library Service

Assistant County Librarian

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Dorset County Library requires a well-experienced Chartered Librarian to fill this third-tier post in the Service, which will become vacant on 1st December, 1976.

Quoted from County Librarian, Dorset County Council, Dorchester DT1 1JB. (Please quote Post LBS.)

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

required for large firm of City Solicitors

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Please apply with full particulars to Herbert Smith & Co. (AS) 82 London Wall, London, EC2R 7AF.

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of a major Library of the History of Art and Architecture.

Candidates should have M.L.S. and at least five years' experience in Library administration. Salary negotiable.

Send nominations or résumés to E. L. Chaloner, Jr., President, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois 60603.

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in Government Departments

There are vacancies in the following Government Departments for candidates with professional qualifications and some practical experience.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
RAF Alconbury, Huntingdon, Cambs.
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
Property Services Agency, Croydon, Surrey.
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS HEADQUARTERS
Library, Cheltenham, Glos.

Further vacancies may arise in these and other Departments.

SALARY, £2,705 to £3,980 (£275 higher in Croydon). Starting salary may be above the minimum. Promotion prospects. Non-contributory pension scheme.

For further details and an application form (to be returned by 1st October 1976), write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 88551 (answering service operates outside office hours) or London 01-839 1892 (24-hour answering service). Please quote ref. G(5)824.

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Education Services

LIBRARIAN

Book Supply and Stock Control
SO1/SO2 £4551-£5304

To be responsible to the Senior Librarian: Dispersed Services for stock control and book acquisition in relation to branch and mobile libraries: responsibilities include book selection, maintenance of stock records, stock selling and control of request service procedures.

Applicants should be Chartered Librarians with experience in the field of bibliographic control and with managerial ability. Candidates must be able to drive and an essential user's car allowance is payable.

Assistance with housing and removal expenses in appropriate cases.

Application forms and further details from the Chief Executive (Personnel Section), 1 Priory Place, Doncaster, DN1 1BN. Tel. Doncaster (0302 252521).

Closing date 8th October.

Library and Information Services in an advanced research environment c. £3000

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Our work covers a wide range of disciplines and can, therefore, provide excellent career opportunities to suitably qualified and experienced technical library and information specialists, men and women, who are looking for a means of widening and developing their experience in a challenging and exciting environment of advanced research. Our particular requirements at present are for—

Technical Librarian

Responsibilities will include developing and maintaining the library including appraising new technical literature and arranging purchase of books and publications; cataloguing, classifying and indexing library material; dealing with user-enquiries and supervising the day-to-day running of the library.

This position would suit a scientist or engineer who has moved into librarianship. Associate Membership of the Library Association is preferred together with an initial qualification and a continued interest in the sciences. Experience in a public or specialist technical or college library would be an advantage.

Information Scientist

To be responsible for the collection, appraisal and dissemination of information throughout the Research Division. Other work will cover developing information storage, classification and retrieval systems and the indexing of internal research reports.

A science degree is essential, possibly in Physics, preferably coupled with post-graduate training in Information Science. Experience in an academic or industrial technical environment would be useful, particularly if this has involved sophisticated retrieval techniques. Working conditions in well equipped surroundings are first class and there are attractive additional benefits.

Write with details of your qualifications and experience to: Mr. C. G. Warren, Personnel Manager, Wilkinson Match Limited, Research Division, Poyle Road, Colnbrook, Slough SL3 0HA.



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...to join a team acting as professional advisers to the Department of Education and Science on library questions, particularly those connected with public libraries, the inter-relationship between library services, and securing maximum use from available library resources. The successful candidates will also advise the Department and library authorities about the exercise of library powers, and may be called upon to assist Advisory Councils. The posts are London-based but local enquiries and visits to libraries may be necessary.

Candidates (normally aged at least 35) must be qualified librarians with at least 8 years' post-qualification experience. They must hold, or have recently held, a senior appointment in a public library. Service in other types of library will also be taken into account.

Salary starting at £6,455 and rising to £8,225. In one post a responsibility allowance of £405 p.a. is payable. Non-contributory pension scheme.

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Department of Education and Science

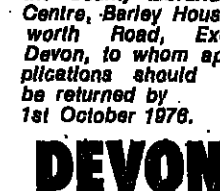
LIBRARY SERVICES

LIBRARIAN GRADE £2,529-£3,284

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For further details and an application form please send a stamped addressed envelope to the County Librarian, Admin. Centre, Barley House, Isleworth Road, Exeter, Devon, to whom applications should be returned by 1st October 1976.



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UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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The Robert Wallace Chair of English Literature of the Post-Modern Period is a new postgraduate research and teaching post in the Department of English Literature.

A science degree is essential, possibly in Physics, preferably coupled with post-graduate training in Information Science. Experience in an academic or industrial technical environment would be useful, particularly if this has involved sophisticated retrieval techniques. Working conditions in well equipped surroundings are first class and there are attractive additional benefits.

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For further details and an application form (to be returned by 1st October 1976) write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 88551 (answering service operates outside office hours) or London 01-839 1892 (24-hour answering service). Please quote ref. G/9381/2.

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UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

Applications are invited for the following appointments:

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Applicants should have a special interest in the history of the city and its literature, and be able to teach and supervise students in the history of the city and its literature.

LITERATURE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CITY

The Department is primarily interested in the history of modern literature, and in particular in the history of the city and its literature. Applicants should have a special interest in the history of the city and its literature, and be able to teach and supervise students in the history of the city and its literature.

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